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FIRST  
PRINCIPLES OF MORAL SCIENCE)  
*AN INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS*

BY  
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*"Nature crescent does not grow alone  
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waves,  
The inward service of the mind and soul  
Grows wide withal."*

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## PREFACE.

THE most common defect of treatises on Ethics is want of exact definition and precise statement, which, with the consequent looseness and diffuseness of style, too frequently deprives such treatises of all scientific value. The present sketch does not, of course, pretend to overcome these defects, but aims merely at a statement of fundamental principles sufficiently exact and concise to be of use to students as an introduction to the subject. The line of thought followed is in the main that of the old Intellectual or Rational School represented by Cudworth, Clarke, Price and Kant, the fundamental principles of which are tacitly assumed, it appears to me, in all the other systems, and especially in the at present more popular Hedonist and Idealist ones. The great difficulty of ethical theory is to find the true medium between the Socratic and Platonic tendency to identify virtue with knowledge, and the more recent tendency to reduce it to a blind instinctive impulse. The rational explanation may be accused of tending too much towards the former extreme. The attempt has been made here to do justice also to the element of spontaneous impulse in conduct. But the primacy of intellection as the basis of freedom, and therefore of morality also, is maintained in opposition to the recent tendency to exaggerate, if not to misrepresent, the function of will. Regard has been had especially to the following works as the most representative in English ethical literature, and most definite in theory and statement: Cudworth's Platonic fragment, "A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality," Hutcheson's "Inquiry,

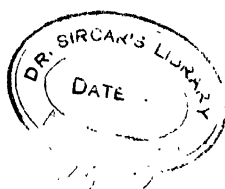
## PREFACE.

into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue," Price's "Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals," Bentham's "Principles of Morals and Legislation," Kant's "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals" and "Critique of Practical Reason" (Semple and Abbot), Mill's "Utilitarianism," Spencer's "Data" with L. Stephen's "Science of Ethics," and Green's "Prolegomena." The treatment is in the main independent, but the classification of motives is based on that of Martineau, and the classification of duties on that of Prof. Muirhead.

For the correction of the text, and the compilation of the index I am much indebted to the printers and publishers, former students of my own.

H. S.

CALCUTTA, }  
30th November, 1903. }



## CONTENTS.

### PART I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. ETHICAL AND MORAL SCIENCE ... ..	1
II. ORIGIN OF ETHICS AND ITS RELATION TO FUNDAMENTAL THOUGHT ... ..	11
III. RELATION OF ETHICS TO COGNATE SCIENCES ... ..	24
IV. THE METHODS OF ETHICAL AND MORAL SCIENCE ... ..	29

### PART II.

#### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ETHICS.

V. VOLUNTARY ACTION : CONDUCT ... ..	35
VI. SPRINGS OF ACTION ... ..	45
VII. CLASSIFICATION OF SPRINGS OF ACTION ... ..	52
VIII. THE MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS ... ..	60
IX. MORAL SENTIMENT ... ..	67
X. CHARACTER ... ..	71

### PART III.

#### ETHICAL JUDGMENT.

XI. THE MORAL JUDGMENT PROPER ... ..	77
XII. THE OBJECT OF MORAL JUDGMENT. ... ..	81
XIII. THE STANDARDS OF ETHICAL AND MORAL JUDGMENT ... ..	85
XIV. LAW AS STANDARD ... ..	94
XV. PLEASURE AS STANDARD ... ..	101
XVI. PLEASURE AS STANDARD—EGOISTIC HEDONISM ... ..	110
XVII. PLEASURE AS STANDARD—ALTRUISTIC HEDONISM ... ..	115

# CONTENTS.

	CHAP.	PAGE
in	XVIII. PLEASURE AS STANDARD—CRITICISM ... ..	130
P	XIX. THE PERFECT SELF AS STANDARD—	
in	IDEALISM ... ..	143
la	XX. HARMONY AS STANDARD—INTUITION ... ..	156
al	XXI. RELATION BETWEEN THE STANDARDS ... ..	164
N	XXII. THE FACULTY OF MORAL JUDGMENT ... ..	168
"	XXIII. SUMMARY OF RESULTS ... ..	194

## PART IV.

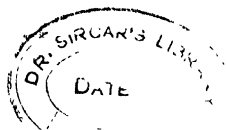
### MORAL LAW.

XXIV. OBLIGATION AND RIGHTS ... ..	199
XXV. DUTIES AND VIRTUES ... ..	225
XXVI. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY ... ..	244

## PART V.

### RESPONSIBILITY.

XXVII. MERIT AND GUILT ... ..	253
XXVIII. SANCTIONS ... ..	263
XXIX. MORALITY AND RELIGION ... ..	272
ADDENDA ... ..	i
ERRATA ... ..	iv
INDEX ... ..	v



PRINCIPLES  
OF  
MORAL SCIENCE

AN INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.

**I. Ethical  
and Moral  
Science.**

- § 1. THE life of every living creature is a continuous struggle towards the preservation and further development and perfection of the creature itself, and of the other creatures with which its own existence is bound up. In animals this struggle for existence and development is blind and automatic in the sense that the animal does not understand what it is striving after, and therefore does not *consciously* regulate its own actions as means towards foreseen and desired ends. In other words, the animal is not a *rational* creature; and
- its conation extends to no higher ends than the preservation of its own physical system, and of the species to which it belongs. But in man the conative energy in which life consists rises into more complex forms. In him it takes the direction not only—

(a) of *physical self-preservation* and *organic*

Man is an  
ethical and  
moral being.



Because his activities are not limited to self-preservation.

development, or effort for the preservation and further perfection of the organic life, originally automatic and instinctive in man as in animals ; but also—

But he is able to form ideas of what is good and perfect.

(b) of *intellectual* development, or the further perfection of those mental powers by which it comes to be aware of itself, and to understand its own position in the world, and thereby to understand on what conditions its own preservation and perfection—its own highest good—depend ; and thereby comes to be “being for itself,” and an end to itself, and thereby to be “spirit” ; and at the same time—

And to adapt his activities to their realization.

(c) of *volitional* development, or development of the powers of self-control and self-regulation, by which its original and essential energy of self-preservation is directed, under the guidance of ideas, into those lines of activity which are most conducive to its highest ultimate perfection.

Hence his power of ethical and moral self-control

In man, therefore, life rises into the *ethical* sphere, or sphere of action self-regulated for foreseen and understood good, and into the *moral* sphere (in the narrower sense) of activity for what is good and right in itself. As a rational being, therefore, the most important of all questions to him is the question of the right regulation of his own activity, with a view to attaining the highest good and perfection of which his nature is capable. And the purpose of ethical and moral science is to determine scientifically how action should be regulated in order that it may be good in itself, and may be conducive to the end of attaining the highest possible good of the agent.

Recent thinkers have been divided as to the

relative importance of *intellection* and *conation* (volition) in human life. There is, indeed, no doubt that the energy which builds up the organism, and carries on the work of organic life, works automatically, and that automatic and instinctive tendencies enter to some extent into conscious life also, and help to determine its desires and activities.

Question of the relation between knowing and willing—intellection and volition.

But one class of thinkers assume that these energies of life, at first automatic and instinctive, become, in rational minds, more and more subjected to idea and thought, so that the rational self acquires the power of controlling and directing its activities towards the realization of those ends which reason discerns to be conducive to the highest good ; and that this self-control through reason is capable of being realized more and more in the course of mental development, which consists in a gradual triumph of reason over automatic impulse. Even the world of physical nature is not blind and random, but is regulated by rational power so as to be a system of means towards ends ; and the finite mind naturally strives to reproduce in itself the same rational self-control and self-adaptation which works in nature. And it is in this realization of itself as a free self-controlled being (spirit) that its highest good consists.

(a) That self regulates its own activities through the medium of thought and idea.

Whence autonomy, self-determination and freedom.

This tendency has been called *intellectualism*, because it makes intellection to be the dominant function of mind, and makes volition to be determined by the self through the medium of ideas. It is assumed in the thought of Fichte, Hegel, and T. H. Green ; but was expressed in its most extreme form in the maxim of Socrates, "virtue is knowledge," meaning that if we only *know* what is good, we can not fail to *do* what is good. And when it is said that the self, as spirit, attains to autonomy, freedom, or power of self-determination, what is meant is that it attains to this power of regulating its activities according to its ideas of what is good.

Others, however, assume that the automatic energy which builds up the organism, and maintains the processes of organic life, continues to work *auto-*

(b) That the

activities of self are determined mainly by sub-conscious forces working automatically and instinctively, and over-ruling idea.

Whence heteronomy, or necessitarianism.

But heteronomy of mind is not consistent with morality in the strict sense.

Nevertheless thought is not a good in itself, but only as a guide to conduct.

*matically* and *instinctively* through all our conscious life; so that we do not really determine our own desires and volitions in the directions which reason judges to be best; but, on the contrary, automatic impulses and desires determine us to act always in the direction of the strongest impulse. This view they seek to confirm by showing that mere *knowledge* of what is good has but little, if any, effect in controlling our actions; that "we know the better, and yet do the worse." This shows, they say, that our actions are determined by subconscious energy *working automatically* according to necessary laws of its own, and that thought and knowledge is only an accidental *by-product* of the forces of life, which does nothing to *determine* the course of life. This automatic energy is nevertheless called *volition* (properly *conation*), and volition is therefore held to be the dominant function.

Hence this way of thinking, which has been made popular by the philosopher Schopenhauer, has been called *voluntarism*. It is obvious, however, that, though consistent with ethics in the sense of an inquiry into the manners and customs of man and what is most expedient in them, it is inconsistent with moral science in the narrower sense, viz., as an inquiry into what is in itself good and right in the actions of men; because the distinction of what is essentially *right* and *wrong* in voluntary action supposes a power of regulating action according to what reason discerns to be good; and therefore supposes that *idea* is able to determine desire, and thereby volition; and therefore supposes intellection to be, or to be capable of becoming, the guiding function of mind.

This does not warrant us, however, in going so far on the side of intellectualism as Aristotle and some other ancients did, who seem to have made intellectual contemplation to be itself the highest good, and God himself to be only (passive) thought. For thought is only a reflection of the world as it exists, an imitation within the soul of what exists without it; and would be but "a vain repetition," without significance, if it were not for this, that

ideation is essential to the guidance of action towards a good. The truth is, therefore, that, while activity without thought to guide it would be blind mechanism, thought without activity to be guided by it would be a meaningless superfluity in the world-system.

§ 2. The English word *ethics* corresponds to the Greek word *ethica*, which is an adjective used substantively and in the plural number, meaning matters pertaining to *ethea*, that is, the habits, manners and customs of men, and to the disposition and character (*ethos*) which reveals itself in them. The nearly synonymous word *morals*, again, corresponds to the equivalent Latin word *moralia*, which also is an adjective in the plural number, meaning things pertaining to the *mores*, that is, the manners and customs of men.

Origin of the words *ethics* and *morals*.

Hence the *ethics* of a nation means the manners and customs, habits and rules of conduct, generally recognised and observed in that nation. Hence the study of ethics, or *ethology* (science of *ethea* or *mores*), in the wider sense of the term, means the study of the manners and customs of peoples, and of questions rising out of such study, *e. g.*, of what is beneficial and harmful, good and bad, in these manners and customs. Ethics or ethology in this sense, therefore, is a branch of the still wider subject of *sociology*, which is the study of the different forms of society, investigating the manners and customs, the social, political and religious institutions of different peoples, and seeking to discover how they originated, and how they have developed from their first beginnings into their present forms.

Meaning of the word *ethics*, and the study of ethics.

The word *morals*, however, originally synonym-

Meaning of  
the word  
morals.

ous with *ethics*, is now generally used with an additional reference, viz., with reference to what is inherently right or wrong in the conduct and habits, manners and customs of persons and communities (apart from what is merely expedient). Thus when we speak of the *morals* of an individual or society, we are thinking not merely of their habits of action (their *ethea*), but also of these habits as being *right* or *wrong* in themselves.

Meanings of  
ethical and  
moral  
science.

And when we add the word *science*, and speak of ethical and moral *science*, a further shade of meaning is introduced. We may use the term *science of ethics* in a wide sense to include *moral science* within it, and to mean the effort to determine scientifically what is good and bad in the actions and habits, manners and customs, laws and institutions of men—including both that goodness which consists in legality and utility or expediency, and that which consists in essential and inherent *rightness*. And we may use the term *moral science* in a narrower sense, for the attempt to determine in what the essential and inherent *rightness* and *wrongness* of actions consist, which we call their *moral* qualities as distinguished from mere legality and utility; and to explain how we perceive, and are attracted or repelled by these moral qualities.

May be used  
synonymously,  
but  
morals properly  
a branch of  
ethics.

Summary.

We may use the term *ethics*, therefore, as a general and convenient term (1) for the habits, manners, and customs of men, and (2) for the systematic investigation of these manners and customs (*ethology*), and (3) for the science which seeks to determine what is good and bad in them. And we may use the terms *morals* and *moral science* when we want to refer specially to that kind of goodness

which consists in their being *right* or *wrong*, and to the process of determining scientifically in what the rightness and wrongness of actions consist.

§ 3. By *moral science*, therefore, (or ethical science in its narrower sense), we mean the study which seeks to determine, with scientific exactitude, what is right and wrong in the actions and habits of action, the manners and customs, laws and institutions of men; and to explain why it is so, and how we know it to be so; and to lay down rules, norms, or standards by which conduct may be judged and regulated with a view to its being what it should be, or to its leading to what is ultimately and essentially good. Hence its province.—

Hence the scope and sphere of moral science proper.

It deals with the contents of the moral consciousness.

(a) It centres, necessarily, about the fundamental attributes of rightness and wrongness, and the judgment in which we predicate these attributes of all of voluntary actions and habits (judging them to be right or wrong), and aims at determining what the contents of that idea are, and how we come to obtain the idea so as to be able to use it as a standard by which to judge every action. But this fundamental moral idea and judgment gives rise to certain others, which have to be considered along with it.—

The fundamental Moral Judgment, implying a Standard of rightness.

(b) Thus, when we judge an action on the part of a particular agent to be right or wrong, we at the same time judge that it is his *duty*, or that he *ought* to do or avoid the action according as it is right or wrong, or, in other words, that he is under an obligation to do or avoid it; and that other persons affected by it have a right to its being done or avoided by him. The judgment of *duty* or *obliga-*

The ideas of Obligation and Rights.

tion therefore always follows that of rightness, and is accompanied by the idea of *rights*.—

Responsi-  
bility, Merit  
and Guilt.

(c) Again, when an agent has done what is right, we *approve* of his conduct, and say that his action is *meritorious* and that he himself possesses *merit*, or that he is thus far *deserving* of approval, and perhaps of reward; and when he does what is wrong, we *disapprove* of his conduct, and say that he has *demerit* or *guilt*, and is *deserving* of disapproval, reproof, and, in some cases, of punishment. We sometimes express this by saying that he is *responsible* for his actions, *i. e.*, liable to disapproval, loss of merit, and perhaps punishment, in the case of his acting wrongly—sometimes called the *sanctions* of conduct.—

Virtue and  
Vice.

(d) And when a person has a permanent tendency or inclination—when it is his established habit or custom—to prefer, and freely perform actions which have the attribute of rightness, we say that he himself possesses the attribute of being *virtuous*; and when the dominant tendency of his character is in the opposite direction, we say he is of *vicious* character.

Hence the  
principal  
moral ideas  
and senti-  
ments.

These ideas then,—those of *rightness* and its opposite, of *oughtness*, *duty*, or *moral law*, of *responsibility*, of *good* and *ill-desert* or *merit* and *guilt*, of *virtue* and *vice*, together with the sentiments or emotions which rise in the mind when we think these ideas, constitute the elements of the *moral consciousness*. And the aim of moral science is to determine the contents of these ideas, and to explain how we come to form them, and to predicate them as attributes of actions and agents. And it is believed that a better understanding of these things should

contribute to a better regulation of conduct and formation of character; and as man's destiny depends upon his conduct and the character out of which it springs, there is no greater concern to any man than the right regulation of his actions.

There are three different ways, however, of defining the problem and province of moral science.

(a) It may be described as dealing with the rightness and wrongness of actions, considered as attributes inherent in the forms of the actions themselves, that is, (as we shall find afterwards) in the results or changes of relation which they are intended to bring about; and it is as dealing with actions under this aspect of *outward form*, that moral science has been described above.

(b) But voluntary actions spring out of desires, dispositions, inclinations; and these together constitute the *characters* of men. Hence the outward forms of men's actions are manifestations of their inward characters, and depend on them; and hence the problem of moral science may be said to be,—to determine scientifically what is good and what is bad in the characters of men; and to determine the ideally perfect type of character, which it is the duty of all men to strive to realize within themselves, as the highest perfection of their nature.

(c) But voluntary actions are actions directed towards the attainment of some object, the realization of some desired *end* already present in idea. In other words, they are means towards ends. They will, therefore, be good or bad according as their ends are good or bad. Hence the problem of morals may also be said to be,—to determine scientifically what is good and bad in our possible *ends* or *objects of action*, so as to guide men to act for those ends which are ultimately the best; and especially, to discover some *ultimate end* or *highest good*, to which all actions, and all other ends of action, shall be only means. The discovery of such an end will enable men to regulate their lives in such a way as to give them order and unity, by making all their actions converge towards one ultimate good.

Different ways of stating the ultimate problem of morals.

As dealing with what is right in the forms of actions, as above.

With what is good in character.

With the ultimate end of actions, or highest good.



But these definitions really identical.

But the above three statements of the problem of moral science can be seen to be identical. For every rational action can be seen to have three aspects : (1) *that of outward form*, the external movements and results, or changes of relation, which it produces ; (2) *that of its subjective springs*, or the inclinations, dispositions, character, which give rise to it ; and (3) *that of the ultimate good* or object towards which it is directed. And the goodness or badness of each aspect is evidently bound up with that of the others in such a way that it comes to much the same thing, whichever of the above statements we may adopt, of the problems of moral science—whether as dealing with the action itself (its outward form), or the *character* out of which it springs, or its ultimate *end*. We shall find, however, that the aspect under which actions can be most easily distinguished, described, and judged is that of their *outward form* ; and in dealing with moral judgment we shall have to deal with them mainly under this aspect.

Ethics, a practical, regulative, normative science, as well as theoretical.

Thus, in defining the problem of ethics, we have already defined its scope or range of subject. And it appears from the above statements that it is not solely a *theoretical* science, inquiring merely what the forms and attributes of conduct are. It does so indeed, and is thus far *theoretical*. But it does so not for the sake of the knowledge merely, but for the purpose of guiding men to those forms of action which are ultimately good, and thereby enabling them to realize the highest excellence of which their nature is capable. It is thus far, therefore, a practical science, teaching how to act so as produce a definite result. And as it aims at laying down *norms* or *standards*, according to which actions ought to be regulated, it may also be called a *normative* or *regulative* science, teaching how to regulate actions in the ways in which the desired result may be most

perfectly attained. As Logic is practical and regulative in the sense that it teaches how to apply our reasoning powers, and regulate their processes so as to attain the truth about things ; and as *Æsthetics* is regulative in the sense that it teaches us how to regulate our judgments of the beautiful ; so Ethics teaches how conduct should be regulated, and thereby how men should *live* ; for "conduct," it has been said, "is four-fifths of life."

**II. Origin and Relation to Fundamental Thought.** § 4 We have next to consider how the ethical problem arises, and how ethics comes to be an object of scientific inquiry, and to consider the relation between ethics and other forms of abstract thought, especially the problems of philosophy and psychology which lie at the foundation of all scientific thought.

How the questions of ethics become subjects of scientific thought.

From the very beginning of time, indeed, human beings have been groping their way towards a solution of the great ethical problems—by what forms of action, by what manners and customs, the highest excellence of human nature may be realized—but without being clearly conscious of the nature of the problems, nor of how they might be solved ; and we can see that the scientific comprehension and treatment of the problems comes comparatively late in history. For, in the first place, we can distinguish three phases in the development of the manners and customs of a people, and their ways of thinking with regard to them :—

(1.) In the earliest and most primitive stage of a people's history, people are trying to find out by experience what lines of action are the best for

In primitive society

manners  
and institu-  
tions origin-  
ate in a  
somewhat  
random  
way without  
reflection.

them ; and gradually, from long experience, they begin to find, or at least to think, that particular lines of action are good and others bad ; and those which they take to be good become gradually ingrained in their minds as habits, and finally established as hereditary manners and customs.

This stage in the history of the race may be said to correspond to youth in the history of the individual, *i.e.*, to be the period when things are being learnt, and habits formed.

And in  
course of  
time become  
fixed and  
transmitted  
as hereditary  
customs,  
necessary or  
divine.

(2.) Then comes the time when rules of actions, habits, manners and customs are fully established and accepted, and, their real origin being forgotten, are regarded as necessary in themselves, or as of divine origin, and are followed without any hesitation or doubt as to their rightness. People act according to them without asking the reason why—taking for granted that they must be right because they are the established and hereditary customs of the country. And thus all the different classes and professions are assumed to have their own settled functions, and remain satisfied with them as being necessarily right.

This period of the race may be said to correspond to the early manhood of the individual, *i.e.*, the period of unhesitating action.

But are  
found at last  
to be imper-  
fectly adapt-  
ed to cir-  
cumstances,  
and doubt  
arises as to  
their origin  
and worth.

(3.) But circumstances change in course of time, and people begin to find at last that the rules of action, habits and customs, which suited their remote ancestors under *their* circumstances, do not suit themselves so well under their new circumstances; and, therefore, begin to question whether these rules, manners and customs are universally and necessarily right after all. Hence doubt arises, and with it come reflection, and criticism of conduct,

manners and customs, and attempts to determine more scientifically what rules of action are really right under different circumstances, and why they are so.

This last phase, therefore, is the period of ethical inquiry, and the beginning of ethics as a science. And the present time is predominantly a period of this kind. All established manners and customs, rules and institutions, social, political and religious, are made the objects of searching criticism and gradual transformation; and hence the many works that have recently been written on ethical subjects.

Hence the necessity at last felt of a scientific study of conduct.

§ 5. But in criticising conduct it is found that the questions with which criticism is confronted resolve themselves into two fundamental ones:—

Two fundamental ethical problems.

(a) It has to determine what general lines of action, and manners and customs of action, are good in the sense of being conducive to the outward physical well-being of individuals and of society collectively, and, therefore, presumably to the general enjoyment and pleasure of mankind—thus judging conduct by the standard of the *pleasure* or *happiness* which it produces.

The hedonistic problem.

(b) It finds, however, that conduct has other attributes besides the attribute of being conducive to outward prosperity. It finds that actions are not only expedient and inexpedient, prudent or imprudent in a material sense, but also *right* and *wrong* in themselves, and that a people may be not only powerful or weak, wealthy or poor, happy or unhappy, but also high or low, noble or mean, exalted or degraded, in a different sense, viz., a *moral* one.

The moral problem proper.

In other words, *moral* distinctions come to be better discriminated and understood, and moral goodness begins to be a rival motive to practical expediency. And it is found that the deepest satisfaction which conduct gives depends ultimately, not on its effects on outward prosperity, but on this essential rightness of the actions themselves; and on the inward harmony of man's nature which manifests itself in this essential rightness of action. Hence the chief problem of ethical inquiry comes to be,—to determine in what this essential rightness, or inherent goodness of action consists, and in what that highest perfection of mind consists which is the ultimate condition of the self-satisfaction in which the highest happiness consists. And this is the function of moral science proper, as a narrower inquiry contained within the wider province of ethics.

But the final solution of these problems supposes knowledge of the nature of mind, and its place and function in the world.

But this ethical question of what is good and bad, right and wrong, in the actions of men, leads back to ulterior questions as to the nature of volition and voluntary action; and then as to that of the mind of which such action is a function, and of the relation of the mind which acts to the other minds affected by its action; and this question again of the relation of mind to mind leads to the higher question of the relation of finite minds to the higher power which gives them their being and connection (God), and to the plan and purpose of the world-system as a whole,—in order to understand the place and function, and thereby the duty, of finite minds therein. But these are questions of psychology and philosophy.

§ 6. Therefore the relation of ethics to these

fundamental subjects of thought requires further consideration, being closely connected also with the scope and methods of ethical inquiry. Now, the constantly renewed effort to arrive at a clear and consistent conception of the plan and system of the world as a whole, and man's relation to it—his origin, function, and destiny as a factor of it—is *philosophy*. Philosophy, therefore, (unless it seeks to restrict itself to the merely external and experimental aspect of things) includes metaphysic also, which aims at an understanding of the nature and relation of the realities underlying what appears to experience, *viz.*, soul, matter, and the absolute reality (God) which is the common ground of both.

In ancient times, as in ancient Greece and India, thought concerned itself wholly with these ultimate questions. Thus philosophy preceded science. But such primitive philosophy took more or less fantastic and mythological forms; and subsequently men began to understand that they must acquaint themselves with the several departments of the world as they manifest themselves to experience, before they could hope to form any adequate conception of realities beyond experience, and thereby of the world-system as a whole. Thus the sciences gradually became differentiated from philosophy and metaphysic; and in modern times have become almost entirely isolated from them.

• Nevertheless the sciences rise out of, and assume, certain fundamental ideas and relations which can be made clear only by metaphysical thought bringing them into connection with the wider system of things. Thus both physics and psychology rest upon such metaphysical ideas as substance, causation, energy and

Therefore the problems of ethics can not be finally settled apart from the problems of philosophy and metaphysic.

But in this respect ethics only agrees with the other sciences.

force, matter and soul, space and time, and the like ; so that it is impossible for one to think clearly in any of these sciences, without being constantly drawn back into the sphere of philosophy and metaphysic, and compelled to seek some "working hypothesis" at least, as to the system and meaning of the world. But it is especially true of ethical science that it leads the mind back to fundamental ideas which fall within the sphere of philosophy. Hence :—

§ 7. 1. *As to the relation of moral science to*

*philosophy and metaphysic* :—We can understand its relation—

(a) *To philosophy in general* in this way.—

The question of man's duty and of man's highest good depends on his place and end in the system of the world.

The philosophy of nature shows that there is no isolated point in the physical world ; every material particle is the centre of a system of relations in which it affects and is affected reciprocally by every other particle, and helps to sustain the moving equilibrium of forces which constitutes the physical world. Similarly, there is no isolated unit in the world of minds ; every mind also is the centre of a system of relations, and every act of every mind affects for better or worse the "harmony of the whole. For every man is a member of the society or community of rational beings, and thereby a factor or active constituent of the world-system as a whole, of which rational beings form an integral part. Therefore his actions all affect, not only his own well-being, but also that of his fellowmen, and determine not only his own destiny, but their destinies also, as factors of the same system ; and thereby affect more or less, for good or ill, the future course and history of the world as a whole.

For the actions of men are practically infinite in their results, *i.e.*, they produce effects which produce other effects, and these others, and so on to the end of time—

“Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And live for ever and for ever.”—

Therefore the question of the goodness and badness of our actions is necessarily bound up ultimately with the question of *their future consequences* to humanity, and thereby to the world-system as a whole.

For (1) man, being a factor in the world-system, must have an ultimate end, object, or purpose to serve, as a member of that system; and therefore the question of the goodness or badness of his actions will be inseparable from the question of his end, purpose, and proper function in the plan of the world, and of how far he has fulfilled his end.

Neither the question what man's end, and therefore duty is,

And further, (2) the rationality of a man's actions means their being directed towards his highest good, and the question, What is his highest good? is involved in the question, What is his end, purpose and function as a member of the world-system? (because it is only in fulfilling his end and purpose in the plan of the whole that he can realize his own highest good.)

Nor the question what his own highest good is,

Hence the fundamental problem of ethics cannot be settled apart from the question of man's end and function as a member of the world-system as a whole; and therefore supposes some understanding of the world-system as a whole, and of the place and function of men as members of that system.

Can be understood apart from the question of his place in the system of the world.

But the effort to understand the plan and system of the world as a whole, and our place in it—the



Hence the moral question is closely connected with the more comprehensive questions of philosophy.

relation of man to nature and to God—is philosophy. Therefore the ultimate problems of ethics cannot be finally settled apart from the fundamental problems of philosophy itself; and no theory of ethics can satisfy the mind fully until it has been shown to follow from, or be consistent with, some approved theory of the world.

Thus, when Aristippus taught that man has no other end and function in the world than to cultivate his powers of enjoyment to the utmost, and to eat, drink, and enjoy himself as long as he possibly can, few accepted this ethical doctrine until it was combined with, and shown to follow from, the atomic philosophy of Democritus; which explained the world as a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and the soul as only an accidentally produced cluster of atoms of the finer kinds, and as possessing, therefore, no function and no destiny beyond its own self-preservation for the time being. Those who accepted this materialistic theory as a plausible explanation of the world as a whole, had no difficulty in accepting the hedonistic ethics of Aristippus. We can thus understand that a theory of ethics derives its power of convincing and satisfying the mind largely from its harmonizing with, or following from, a philosophical explanation of the world.

And also with the narrower philosophical questions called metaphysical.

§ 8. (b) Hence we can understand also its relation to the *special questions of metaphysics*. Our actions are manifestations outwardly of the inward nature of the mind. Therefore questions regarding the nature and qualities of conduct necessarily involve reference to the nature of the mental principle itself. Hence ethical inquiry, however much it may strive to be purely empirical and limit itself to experience, can never avoid permanently such questions as these:—

(i) The essential nature of the *mind* itself which

thinks, judges, and acts. (1) Is mind to be regarded as merely the series and sum of the conscious states, and these conscious states as accidental and inessential "by-products" of the automatic working of the cells and fibres of the brain? If so, its only conceivable end will be to preserve and develop itself as harmoniously and enjoyably as possible, within the world which has produced it.

Such as that of the substantiality of mind—whether it is an aggregate of phenomena,

Or (2) is it to be regarded as a permanent active principle of which thinking, feeling, and willing are only functions; and which remains essentially the same through all successive changes of state; and makes, rather than is made by, its circumstances and relations in the world; and shares in the nature of the power which evolves and supports the world, instead of being but an accidental product of the world itself; and has, therefore, a destiny and duty extending beyond and above the world of phenomena?

or a substantial reality with an end and function of its own.

These fundamental metaphysical questions, again, contain within them the following more familiar ones.—

(ii) The nature of the rational activity of the self which ethical judgment pronounces to be good or bad. (1) Is it determined by the thinking principle itself according to its perception and conviction of its own highest good? in which case it will be self-determined, and possessed of autonomy, or freedom of will.

Which again involves the question of the freedom of the will.

Or (2) is the self only a focus of natural forces acting from without; so that it is itself but a *passive* product, and all its activities are determined from without, being nothing but the resultants of conflicting and combining forces, like the motions of a

planet or comet? in which case it will be subject to *heteronomy* and *necessity*.

Now the autonomy of will evidently supposes the first of the theories of mind referred to above (p. 3); and heteronomy evidently supposes the second; and it is evident also that the fundamental ethical ideas—rightness and wrongness, merit, responsibility, guilt, reward and punishment—will differ essentially according as they are deduced from the one or the other of these metaphysical theories of mind and will.

And that of  
the future  
life.

(iii). The question of *the self's continuation* as the same conscious self after the limits of the present life. For it is clear that nothing will affect conduct more than the answer given to the question, whether we have the "be all and the end all here;" or have in this life only the preliminary phase of a self-conscious existence extending far beyond its own limits. And to these questions we may add also—

And moral  
results  
depend  
also on  
the question  
of the being  
and nature  
of God.

(iv) The question whether the self owes its existence to, and is therefore directly responsible to, a higher personal power, *viz.*, God. If so, God will be looked up to as the type and standard of righteousness, and human righteousness will have the approval and sanction of a higher mind; and this belief cannot fail to influence conduct powerfully.

Hence  
the so-called  
postulates of  
ethics and  
morals.

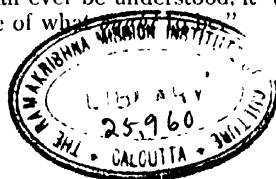
Indeed these metaphysical principles of the substantiality of soul, freedom of will, future life, and the being of God are so closely connected with all our ethical conclusions, that many writers have thought it necessary to begin by laying them down as *postulates* which morals must assume, because without them morals would be impossible. But this method is open to the charge of *dogmatism*—first making assumptions, and then drawing deductions from them. The safer method is to begin with *analysis* of the moral cognitions as we have them in experience, and then to advance from these ascertained

facts to whatever metaphysical truths may be found to be necessarily implied in them.

Since Kant's "*Critique of Practical Reason*," however, many have taken a new and peculiar view of the relation of moral knowledge to philosophy and metaphysic. It is commonly assumed that the knowledge which we obtain of the physical world by our perceptual and reasoning powers is the fundamental and surest department of knowledge, and that our ethical ideas of what *should be* must adapt and accommodate themselves to theoretical knowledge of what *is*. Kant had tried to show, however, in the "*Critique of Theoretical Reason*," that our knowledge of the world and of mind, though subject to invariable and necessary laws, is nevertheless phenomenal only, or a knowledge only of appearances, and not of things as they really are. Our practical and moral cognitions on the contrary, *i.e.*, of right and wrong, duty and responsibility, are felt to be unconditionally and absolutely true. These, therefore, are the fundamental and surest department of knowledge, and the objective truth of all our other ideas—the reality of World, Soul and God—is certain only in so far as such realities are contained in, and deducible from, our fundamental moral cognitions, or practical knowledge. Thus the laws of duty are found to imply the substantial reality of soul which feels itself bound by these laws; of freedom to act in conformity with these rules; of the physical world which is the sphere of its activities; and of a supreme personal power to whom all duty is ultimately due; and of a continuation of conscious existence beyond the present life as a necessary condition of the soul's attaining the perfection of nature for which it is its duty to strive. Thus all certainty as to ultimate realities is founded, not on scientific analysis and reasoning, but on the intuitions and requirements of our moral nature; and their being implied in our moral convictions is the real ultimate ground of their certainty. "Originative cause is reached only through conscience." "If what *is* can ever be understood, it will be only from the side of what *ought to be*."

Tendency of recent thought to invert the above relation, and to make scientific certainties to depend ultimately on moral convictions.

That it is conscience that makes us sure of Soul, World and God.



The understanding of Ethical questions supposes an understanding of psychological results.

§ 9. II. *As to the relation between Ethics and Psychology*:—We have found that ethical science deals with what is good and bad in *voluntary action*. Therefore it will suppose an understanding of what *voluntary action* is, as contrasted with other kinds of action (*viz.*, *unconscious* actions and actions which are conscious but performed *automatically*, *e. g.*, *spontaneous*, *reflex*, and *instinctive* ones). In other words, it will suppose an understanding of the nature of *volition* or *willing*.

Now every volition springs out of *desire* or *motive*, so that the character of a voluntary action will depend, in part at least, upon the character of the motive or desire out of which it springs. Desire, again, springs out of *feeling* and *emotion*; emotions rise out of *ideas*; ideas out of *perceptions* and *sensations*.

Psychology rises to the nature of will, and this leads to the moral question, What is right and wrong in voluntary actions?

For sensations give rise to perceptions; percepts lead to ideation—*i. e.*, to memory, imagination and reasoning,—ideation leads to emotions, emotions to desires or motives, motives to choice and volition; and volition realizes itself in *voluntary action*. Finally voluntary action leads to the question of what is good and bad, right and wrong in such action, which is the problem of ethics in general, and of moral science in the stricter sense.

Therefore we cannot determine scientifically what is right or wrong in voluntary action without first determining scientifically what such action is; and, therefore, what emotion, desire and volition are, out of which it springs. Therefore the scientific study of emotion and will may be said to be common ground to both psychology and ethics. And thus we can see that moral science rises out of

psychology, and that indeed the first part of its course coincides with this last part of psychology.

But psychology and ethical science, though they have certain questions in common, differ as to the ends which they have in view. Psychology studies desire, motive and volition for the sake of knowledge merely, i. e., merely for the sake of knowing the nature of the processes. It belongs, therefore, to the class of sciences called theoretical, or those which aim merely at knowing what things are, and how they have come to be what they are. Ethical science, however, goes beyond this, and aims not merely at knowing what desire, motive and volition are, but also, and more especially, at determining what they ought to be, and how they should be regulated in order that the human nature of which they are the functions and manifestations may become what it ought to be, and may thereby realize the potentialities of perfection which are latent in it. Hence it belongs to that class of sciences which teach, not so much what certain things are, as how we ourselves should act in order to make certain things better than they are, i. e., to the class of so-called practical sciences.

What then is the distinction between the two?

The one essentially theoretical, the other practical.

The term practical, indeed, may be objected to, as applied to sciences. What science as such directly aims at, it may be said, is always knowledge of something. The knowledge which the sciences supply prompts men to act in many cases, and guides their action; but this makes no difference to the essential nature of the sciences themselves. In other words, knowledge may prove to be practically useful for the guidance of action, but science as such has to do with the knowledge only, and not with the actions, and is therefore always theoretical, and never really practical.

Sociology and Politics agree with Ethics in dealing with voluntary actions and their products.

How then do they differ ?

### III. Relation to Cognate Sciences.

§ 10. Ethics and Morals, therefore, as a science, rises out of psychology, the fundamental science of mind ; and deals with one department of the mind's manifestations, *viz.*, conduct or voluntary action. But two other sciences, *viz.*, Sociology and Politics, deal with the same functions and products of mind. These three are therefore cognate and kindred sciences ; dealing in fact with different aspects of the same subject. It is necessary, therefore, to mark out the relation between them. Hence :—

I. *As to the relation between Ethics and Sociology.*—Sociology is a general term for those studies which investigate and describe the habits, manners, customs and institutions of human society in all its stages of development, from the savage state to the civilized, trying at the same time to discover how they have originated, and developed from form to form and stage to stage, until they have grown into the different forms which we now find in the world.

Meaning of Sociology.

Thus it begins with the ways of life of primitive men as revealed by archæological research, and exemplified by the barbarous races of the present day ; and investigates their manners and habits, their religious beliefs and ceremonies, their marriage customs, their methods of justice and government, their arts and manufactures, trying especially to discover how they originated and developed. Then it rises to more and more civilized forms of society, and tries to explain how the different classes, professions, institutions, and forms of government have originated and reached their present forms, by gradual development from earlier and lower ones ; and to discover the causes and laws which

have governed their development. The most elaborate and philosophical studies of this kind have been by Comte and Spencer.

Therefore sociology is a purely theoretical inquiry, and examines the manners and customs of men as they actually have been. It is, of course, a mental science, because these are all products of mind. It is to be distinguished, therefore, from anthropology—the latter being properly a physical science, describing the physical structures and blood-relationships of different races, rather than their mental products such as manners and customs, though this distinction is not always maintained. Hence:—

1. Sociology is an objective mental science, dealing not directly with mind itself and its processes, but with objective products of mind, *viz.*, customs, laws, institutions. Ethics is rather a subjective mental science, dealing directly with mind itself—its desires, dispositions, volitions, and the standards to which they must conform in order to be what they should be.

Sociology deals with external products rather than states and processes of mind.

2. Sociology, again, deals with the collective products of minds, because customs and laws are produced not by individuals singly, but by society collectively. Ethics goes farther back to the source of mental products, and deals rather with the workings of the individual mind.

And deals with them collectively, rather than individually.

3. Finally, sociology is purely theoretical, dealing with products of mind as they *have been* and *are*. Ethics has a practical motive, its object being to determine what the dispositions and actions (and thereby the products also) of mind *should be*, if men are to attain the highest possible perfection of their nature; and thus rises from the theoretical

And is a theoretical inquiry, dealing with what has been and is—not with what should be.



stage into being *practical, regulative, normative*.

Summary.

Thus the one deals with *objective products* of mind, and deals with them *collectively*, and from a *theoretical* point of view. The other deals with the *subjective* working of the *individual* mind, and with a *practical* purpose in view.

Meaning  
and origin  
of Politics.

§ 11. 11. *As to the relation between Ethics and Politics.*—They agree in this that both rise out of sociology, and both are practical inquiries dealing with the regulation of human action. The manners and customs which sociology deals with have grown up to a great extent automatically in the course of ages. The lowest savages have no politics, and little or no moral reflection, or thought of what is right in itself. But in more civilized times men begin to reflect on their collective actions and customs, and to consider whether they are good or bad, and find that some of them are beneficial and others injurious in a material sense; and then begin to consult together, and finally establish governors or governing bodies, to deliberate for them and determine how they should act collectively—*i. e.*, what laws they should establish, when they should make war or peace, and so on.

Now the question, how the collective actions of the community should be deliberately regulated by laws and institutions, for the end of safety and material prosperity, is the *problem of politics*.

Differs from  
Sociology  
and agrees  
with Ethics  
in being  
practical.

Thus sociology and politics agree in this, that they deal with the customs and institutions of men collectively but sociology is theoretical merely, showing what such institutions have been and are; while politics is practical, dealing with the question, what machinery should be set up to regulate the

laws, institutions, and collective conduct of men (a legislature and an executive), and what laws of action should be enforced, and how.

Therefore ethics and politics agree thus far, that their object is to determine how men *should* act, and thus to guide and direct conduct, *i. e.*, both are *practical* and *regulative*. But they differ in these points.—

(a) As to their *standards*. There are two standards according to which men may act, and judge their own actions, *viz.*, *expediency* and *moral rightness*.

But Politics and Ethics in the sense of Morals differ as to their standards.

(1.) Thus one problem is to determine what lines of action will be most *useful*, *i. e.*, most conducive to the safety, wealth, health and prosperity of society collectively; to prescribe rules of action to guide and constrain people to act collectively in the ways most conducive to collective welfare and prosperity; and to set up institutions for the enforcing of these rules. This is *political science*, which aims at public utility.

The one has expediency and

(2.) Another problem is to determine what forms of action are *right* and *good* in themselves, according to the *moral* standard—because actions may be productive of gain to those that do them, and yet wrong in themselves. (It might be advantageous to the Turks to exterminate the Macedonians from a political point of view, but it would be wicked morally.)

The other essential rightness.

Hence to determine what is advantageous or productive of gain to the community, and to determine what is right, are two different problems; and the latter is *the problem of ethics*, especially in the sense of *morals*, and the former that of *politics*.

As to their  
sphere.

The one—  
external  
results and  
products  
considered  
collectively.

(b) As to their scope or sphere.—(1) Politics is *objective*, dealing with the *external* forms and products of actions in their bearing on the collective welfare, and takes no account of the feelings and motives out of which they spring, but only of their outward results bearing on the public welfare; and, therefore, *collective* also, in as much as it regulates chiefly the collective actions of men, and actions of individuals only in so far as they affect the collective welfare.

The other—  
subjective  
desires and  
intentions  
considered  
individually.

(2) Ethics and morals on the contrary go back to the ultimate sources of action within the minds of individuals; and is therefore *individual* and *subjective*, determining what is good and right in the desires and motives out of which actions spring, and *that* even in cases which do not affect the collective public welfare, and to which therefore political laws do not apply.

As to their  
authority.

Expediency  
considered  
subject to  
moral law.

(c) As to their respective rank and authority.—The fact that ethics thus deals with the ultimate sources of conduct within the mind, and the ultimate standard of right and wrong, gives ethics *a position of superiority and authority over politics*. Many apparently useful and profitable actions are wrong morally, but moral law claims to be supreme over utility—the moral standard over the *political*. Therefore the politician claims to be himself dominated always by the sentiment of justice, and to enforce only those advantageous lines of action which are right in themselves as well as advantageous. In this sense, therefore, politics is, or should be, *subject to ethics—political laws to moral laws—i.e.*, no laws should be imposed for the public gain, which are not right and just in themselves.

Hence the politician always claims that his measures are in conformity with moral law—though they may not always be so—thus acknowledging the superiority of moral over political considerations.

(d) Finally, as to *the ways in which their standards and laws are carried into practice—i. e., the nature of their sanctions*.—Political laws are enforced by threats of *punishments—moral laws are not*. It is essential to the very nature of *right action* that it be performed *freely* and *voluntarily* for its own sake, without any constraint. • When forced, it ceases to be morally good. Actions done from constraint or fear of punishment merely may be *politically expedient*, but have no *moral* merit, *i. e.*, do not manifest any excellence in the agent as a rational and moral being.

And as to the way in which their laws are carried out.

Fear of penalties.

Free self-determination.

It is to be remembered, however, that the relation of the two has been estimated differently by different schools. One ethical school, *viz.*, the utilitarian, and especially one branch of that school, *viz.*, the egoistic, has practically identified ethics with politics, by making the highest good to consist in happiness, and rightness of conduct to consist in its conduciveness to happiness. Politics determine what is best for the happiness of society, and force individuals to conform to it, by imposing punishments. And morality is made to consist in the conformity of individuals to political laws for the good of society indeed, but from fear of punishment to themselves, so that their real motive is their own interest. But those who think that the moral rightness of conduct is a quality distinct from conduciveness to happiness will make a clear distinction between ethics and politics.

The Utilitarian School however tends to identify morals with politics.

#### IV. The Methods of Ethical and Moral Science.

§ 12. Every science deals with a particular department of truth. It applies differentiation and analysis to the products and processes, things

The Methods of Science—analysis, induction and deduction.

and events, coming within its province, in order to resolve them into their simplest constituents. It applies experimental methods and inductive generalization to determine what elements in these things and events are of universal occurrence, and what their uniform antecedents, and thereby what their causes, are. It applies deductive reasoning to show how the supposed causes or reasons of these things and events combine and co-operate so as to produce them, and how they themselves again combine so as to produce other effects, and so on. Thus analysis, induction, and deduction, ending in synthesis of results, are the fundamental methods of scientific investigation,—one method predominating perhaps in one science, and another in another. 25960

Ethics and morals if scientific must follow the same methods.

Now the province of ethical and moral science is conduct or voluntary action, and if it be a science like other sciences it will have to apply the same methods to determine the nature and attributes of conduct. Thus—

They have to analyse the mental processes and external results of voluntary action.

(A) It will have to begin by observing and analysing, with scientific exactitude, the class of things and processes which come within its sphere, *viz.*, the nature and circumstances of voluntary action,—its sources within the mind and the different mental constituents entering into it, the objects or ends at which it aims, and the results to which it leads. Thus far it will only be traversing the same ground as the psychology of will.

They have to determine the grounds or reasons on account of

(B) This psychological analysis will enable it to rise next to the problems which are more peculiar to itself, *viz.*, the different *grounds* or *reasons*, norms or standards, according to which actions may

be judged good or bad, right or wrong; and the question whether any ultimate ground can be discovered which will contain under it, and explain all other grounds, *e.g.*, a *summum bonum* or highest good. And in thus trying to discover what it is that makes actions to be right or wrong, (or in what their rightness or wrongness consists) it will have to proceed either (*a*) by further psychological analysis of what our consciousness tells us with regard to the nature and attributes of voluntary actions, with inductive generalization of the particular facts discovered; or (*b*) by deduction from fundamental ideas of reason, or from general results already arrived at by other sciences. Thus—

which actions are judged right or wrong.

Which they must do either by further analysis and generalization, or by deduction.

§ 13. (*a*) We may attempt to settle this, the fundamental problem of moral science, by further application of the same method of *psychological analysis* already applied in investigating the nature of will. Thus by analysing further the perceptions and feelings which we experience in connection with voluntary action, we may determine whether these perceptions and feelings give us any information directly as to the rightness and wrongness of our actions.

Hence the method of psychological analysis may be applied to discover the nature of rightness and wrongness.

Thus we may find that these perceptions contain a clear consciousness or self-evident intuition of rightness and wrongness as attributes seen to be inherent in the *form* and *nature* of actions, when considered in relation to their motives and circumstances even without any consideration of the ultimate results to which the action may lead. This has been the method followed by the ethical thinkers called Intuitionists such as Cudworth, Clarke,

By which some have arrived at the theory of Intuitive or Independent moral rightness.

Hutcheson, Price, Reid, Stewart, and Martineau and the result arrived at has been called Intuitionist or Independent morality.

And some at the Utilitarian theory. Or we may find a cognition and conviction that a particular kind of *good*, which we are conscious of in our experience as a consequence of certain actions, is the highest good of which our nature is susceptible; and conclude from this that action is right or wrong according as it is conducive to, or subversive of, this highest good. This is the method followed by those thinkers who have held it to be self-evident that the form of feeling called pleasure or happiness is the highest good; and have founded on this supposed deliverance of consciousness their Hedonistic and Utilitarian theory of rightness, that the rightness of actions is merely their attribute of being conducive to happiness, *e.g.*, Hume, Bentham, James and J. S. Mill.

All these thinkers, therefore, whether intuitionist or utilitarian, have followed what may be called an *analytical, psychological, or inductive* method, though it has led them to the above divergent results.

§ 14. (b) Or we may approach the fundamental problem of morals *deductively*. Thus we may begin with certain fundamental ideas and principles assumed hypothetically as postulates, or regarded as self-evident in themselves *a priori*; or we may begin with general conclusions already established by previous inductive inferences, *viz.*, by other sciences. Then from these *a priori* principles or inductively established results as premisses we may try to determine, by reasoning downwards deductively, what the nature of rightness and wrongness of conduct,

Or the method of deduction from accepted premisses may be applied to determine the nature of rightness and wrongness.

and what human duty and responsibility are ; or what the highest possible *good* of human beings is, from which the goodness or badness of their actions and the nature of duty may be determined by further deduction. Thus :—

(1) We may begin with assuming as already established by natural philosophy that the human mind is only an accidental and non-essential *by-product* of the physical forces of nature, and possesses no substantial reality or independence of its own ; and that its feelings, desires, and volitions are determined therefore by natural forces operating according to natural laws, as much as the movements of the stars are so determined.

Hence the naturalistic method, assuming that nature is highest, and man a product of nature.

From this *naturalistic* or *materialistic* view of the origin and nature of man the conclusion will probably be drawn, that man can have no existence, and no significance or function, apart from his present position in the physical world which has produced him ; and that the only good of man, therefore, consists in preserving his own individual existence as long as is possible in conflict with the forces of nature, and making this temporary existence of his as enjoyable as possible while it lasts.

From which principle as premiss the Utilitarian theory of morals follows as consequence.

Therefore this naturalistic deductive method also will lead to the Hedonistic or Utilitarian view of morals. It is the method followed in the main by Epicurus, Lucretius, Hobbes, Helvetius, Spencer, and many others.

(2) Or we may begin with assuming as self-evident, or as already established by rationalistic philosophy, that the world is a system of means adapted for the realization of an end or good ; and that the end at which it aims includes, at least, the developing and perfecting of the highest form of

And the idealistic method, assuming that mind is highest, and man therefore above



nature, and  
nature only  
a means.

finite being, *viz.*, self-conscious mind. This is equivalent to assuming that the world is developed and regulated by mental power, and that finite minds are both ends in themselves, and at the same time means towards the realization of some higher end, or universal good.

From which  
the idealistic  
or perfec-  
tionist view  
of morals  
follows as  
consequence.

This *idealistic* conception of the world-system will lead deductively to a conception of human conduct, and of what is good and bad in it, very different from the preceding one. Man will not be a mere "by-product" of nature, but will be *above nature* in the sense of being himself an end to which nature is only a means; and will have a function in the world-system other than his own preservation and enjoyment; and the goodness of his conduct will depend on its conformity with his function in the world; and the perfection of his nature will depend on its adaptation to his highest function and end in the economy of the world.

This is the method followed mainly by idealistic thinkers such as Plato, and Hegel, and recently, T. H. Green.

But the ana-  
lytical and  
deductive  
methods are  
both requir-  
ed to give a  
satisfactory  
solution of  
ethical  
problems.

Both these deductive methods of dealing with the moral problem are open to the charge, it will be seen, of being *dogmatic*, that is, of starting from assumptions not fully warranted (it may be thought), principles not fully demonstrated; and allowing deductions from such unreliable premisses to override, perhaps, the evidences supplied by our own immediate consciousness.

But on the other hand, it must be admitted that psychological analysis also is liable to error, and may assume as given by intuitive perception, and

therefore as objective truth, what is merely filled in by imagination under the influence of feeling. Therefore even results arrived at by analysis stand in need of being confirmed by being shown to be consistent with some reasonable theory of the system of the world as a whole.

Thus a philosophical and deductive method of reasoning is required to supplement and confirm the analytical.

## PART II.

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ETHICS.

**V. Voluntary Action : Conduct.** § 15. Life may be said to consist in the continual struggle of the creature to preserve, develop, and perfect itself, and therefore in *activity*. But life does not everywhere rise into consciousness, and conscious life does not everywhere rise into self-consciousness, *i e.*, to an understanding of itself as an independent principle of activity, regulating its own activities and determining its own destiny, and therefore as 'being for self,' or spirit. Thus plants have life, but in them the activity of self-preservation and self-development in which life consists is unconscious activity. In animals the vital activity becomes conscious, and mind makes its appearance. But their activity is not the self-regulated activity which is volition proper. Indeed we must distinguish the following stages or phases in the development of conscious activity :—

(a) Some conscious activity is of what may be

Life may be described as effort of self-preservation and self-development.

But life-effort manifests itself in several forms.

As spontaneous activity.

called the *spontaneous* kind, that is, an overflow of accumulated and surplus energy by the lines of least resistance, without any stimulus from without, and therefore apparently fortuitous or random in its direction and effects; and it is mainly from such fortuitous activities, when they produce new and beneficial results, that new powers and habits are developed.

As reflex activity.

(b) Some, again, are of the *reflex* kind, that is, are directly stimulated and drawn forth by impressions made by surrounding things on the periphery of the organism, *i. e.*, by contact, temperature, light, sound, and the like. The peculiarity of these, therefore, is that they are drawn forth in a particular direction by a present exciting cause, and preserve the creature from present injury by adapting it to some present change of circumstances.

As instinctive activities.

(c) Some, again, are of the more complex kind called *instinctive*, and consist in series of combined activities, organized and adapted in such a way as to prepare not for immediately present, but for future changes of circumstances; and to supply wants and preserve the creature itself or its race against dangers which have no existence at the present moment, but will be felt at some future time, by the creature itself or by its offspring.

Instinctive activities, therefore, agree with voluntary actions proper in being very complex, and in their being combined and adapted so as to make preparation beforehand for future circumstances. But they differ in this, that they are performed in an automatic, and apparently mechanical way, without any *prevision* or *intention*, *i. e.*, without any idea and desire of the future results which they are adapted to produce, or any thought of the means by which they produce them. They are

adapted to produce future results for the good and preservation of the creature and its race, and yet without any foresight, understanding, or intention on the part of the creature—the way in which this adaptation is brought about being still one of the mysteries of biology.

§ 16. The characteristics of voluntary action, on the other hand, are that the agent is fully conscious of his present, and can anticipate in idea (by power of inference and imagination) his future circumstances—that he is aware of his own present wants, imperfections and dangers, and can represent future ones in thought; and that he can picture in idea also the condition in which he would be, and the relief and satisfaction which he would feel, if these wants and imperfections were overcome.

And as  
voluntary  
action

Then the consciousness of present or anticipated want, in contrast with the idea of future relief, gives rise to the state of mind called *desire*; and the object desired—*i.e.*, the relief from, or the *means* of relieving him from want and imperfection—becomes to him an anticipated *good* and *end* of action, something to be sought and attained by means of *activity*, an idea to be realized by *effort*. And the desire gives rise to the further intellectual processes of *devising*, and *combining in idea*, lines of action and intermediate means by which the ideal good may be realized.

Mental  
processes in-  
volved in  
voluntary  
action.

End, desire,  
motive.

But, as there are always many needs and imperfections, and therefore many objects of desire and possible ends of action, present to consciousness simultaneously, and sometimes many different means of attaining them; the self is under the necessity of *deliberating*, *judging* and *determining*

Deliberation,  
judgment  
and volition.

what objects of desire it shall adopt as its ends of action, and what means it shall adopt for the attainment of them ; and then of concentrating and directing its vital energy into the lines of action thought needful for the realization of the chosen ends.

Activity thus determined and regulated by the thinking self for the realization of its own ideas of what is good—of what will conduce to its own preservation and greater perfection, and to that of others with whom its own good may be bound up—is *voluntary action or conduct*.

Conditions  
involved—  
power of  
reason.

It supposes, therefore, the exercise of those intellectual powers connoted by the word *reason*—experience and memory of the past ; inference from what has happened in the past to what will happen in the future ; power of mental representation or imagination, to picture future circumstances in terms of present ideas ; power of judging what the true needs and imperfections of the self are, and by what means they may be overcome, and how the greatest perfection of its own nature may be realized.

And of self-  
determina-  
tion.

And in addition to this intellectual power of judging and representing, it supposes that the self possesses the peculiar power of determining the direction of its own activities according to ideas, of identifying itself with one particular idea and desire in preference to others, and projecting its own vital energy (so to speak) into the activity of realizing that chosen idea. And it is in this act of *self-determination*, or of directing its own activities to the realization of desired ends, that *volition* consists. In merely instinctive activity there is no *self-determination*, because there is no conscious idea of an end to which the self can determine itself, or of the means of realizing it. Voluntary action, therefore, is possible only to rational beings.

§ 17. These then are the distinguishing charac-

teristics of voluntary action. But we can see that, in performance, it passes through several *phases* or *stages*,—from its inception within the mind to its completion in outward results or consequences. It begins with the above processes within the mind. Then it passes into nerve currents, muscular contractions, and movements of limbs. Finally, it completes itself in external results, *viz.*, in changes of relation between persons and things in the outer world. Hence, to understand the natural history, (so to speak) of a voluntary action, we have to trace the successive phases of development through which it passes from inception to completion.

Detailed analysis of voluntary action.

Three phases.

(A) Thus we have first to analyse the mental stage of the action before it passes outwards into muscular contractions and movements. This phase of the action includes :—

Mental phase—origin within the mind.

(a) The *incipient* stage or ultimate *spring of the action within the mind*. All voluntary action has its ultimate source in a feeling of *want* and *imperfection*, whether present or anticipated, which may be considered the ultimate spring of action. The feeling of want suggests, by inference from past experience, the *idea* of something which will relieve the want, or remove the imperfection. And this idea suggests the *satisfaction* and *relief* which will result from its own realization. And the want and idea and ideal satisfaction together give rise to the state of *desire*, which is a craving for the realization of the idea, and the consequent relief. By thus surrounding itself with desire the idea rises into being an incipient *motive* force impelling to action for its own realization ; and the something represented by the idea is raised

Present or foreseen want.

Idea.

Desire.

End.

into an *end* of action.

The feeling of want may come first and suggest the idea of what will relieve it, as hunger suggests the idea of food and the means of obtaining it; or the perception and idea of an absent good may awaken the mind to a consciousness of its imperfection in being without it, and suggest the means of obtaining it, as the sight of a beautiful object makes one long to possess it.

(b) Then comes the phase of *deliberation* and *judgment*, in which (1) the *means* by which the idea may be realized, and the ulterior *consequences* which will follow from realizing it, are thought out by means of inference from past experiences to future ones, and the whole future course of the action thus brought before the mind in representation; and then (2) the action thus viewed as a whole is compared with possible *alternative* actions (actions directed towards other ends, or different forms of actions for the same end), and judged to be *expedient* or *inexpedient*, *right* or *wrong*, according to the standards of *utility* and *moral rightness*. It is into this stage of the action, therefore, that the moral judgment enters.

(c) Next comes the phase of *self-determination* or the *volition proper*, in which the self identifies itself for the time being with a particular *desire*, and thereby with the realization of a particular *idea*, the satisfaction of a particular *want*, the attainment of a particular *end*. This is commonly described as an act of *choosing* between two or more lines of action, or two or more springs, desires, or motives of action.

But it is doubtful whether the word *choosing* expresses correctly what really takes place. We choose between things presented to us from with-

Deliberation  
as to means  
and conse-  
quences.

Judgment as  
to better and  
worse.

Volition pro-  
perly so  
called.

Not choice  
so much as  
self-deter-  
mination.

out. But desires are elements of the mind itself. What takes place consists rather in this, that the self after deliberation (in which different alternative ends of action, together with the means and consequences of realizing them, are compared together in thought) feels the superiority of one end over another, and identifies itself with the superior one, as with its own highest good, or with its own self-preservation and perfection. It is not so much a *choosing* between desires (like something presented from *without*) as a making or unmaking of desires from *within*; because in proportion as deliberation opens up, and the thinking self appreciates, the comparative *worth* of different ends, the desire of realizing them grows or fades away.

Now this self-determination, by which the self identifies itself for the time being with the realization of a particular end, raises that end, together with the means and foreseen consequences of realizing it, into *intention*.

Intention.

And this concentration of mental energy upon a single idea and the means of realizing it has another effect; the energy thus concentrated overflows into the proper nerves and muscles, and thus the action passes into—

(B) The *motor stage*, or that of the muscular movements and means which are necessary for realizing the intention, and in which the action passes from mind into body (so to speak), and manifests itself in bodily movements. For the idea of the chosen end is accompanied by ideas of the movements and means needed to realize it; and the energy accumulated by the desire, and concentrated and propelled by the volition, and guided by ideas of the needed movements, flows over into the out-carrying nerves, and thereby into the muscles of the limbs, producing, co-ordinating, and adapting the movements needed

Organic stage—out-going nerve-currents, muscular contractions and limb-movements.



for the desired and intended results.

Then through the medium of physical movements the action passes over into—

Final stage  
—objective  
results.

(C) The *stage of completion*, viz., in the results or effects which it produces, commonly outside the body, as no action is complete until it has produced the results which it was intended to produce; and which are partly immediate or proximate, but in many cases extend into the remote future, affecting the destinies of self and others. It follows, however, that the results of actions, proximate and remote, are very complex, and include—

Analysis of  
results.

(1) The  
realized  
intention  
including—

(1.) The realized *intention*, or all that the agent foresees and wills to bring about by means of the action; which, again, will include—

The realized  
end or object  
desired,

(i) The result which the agent has *foreseen* and *desired*, and for the sake of which he has performed the action. This desired result must have been represented beforehand in idea (otherwise it could not have been desired); and, in the stage of idea, it is spoken of as the *end* of the action, or that which the agent *wishes* to realize by means of the action; while the idea and desire together are spoken of as the *motive*, or that which moved the agent to perform the action;

The realized  
means,

(ii) The things which the agent foresees to be necessary as *means* for attaining the desired end, and wills to perform for the sake of the end, though they may not be desirable in themselves, e.g., the labour which has to be undergone, and sacrifices which have to be made;

And realized  
conditions

(iii) And the many accompaniments and *ulterior consequences*, which can be foreseen to be inseparable from the attainment of the object de-

sired, but which may not themselves be desirable, and are incurred only because the desired end cannot be attained without them. For though these means and accompaniments are undesirable in themselves, they are not sufficiently repellent to counteract the desirableness of the end itself, and hence the end is desired and sought in spite of them, and they are deliberately *intended* and encountered for the sake of the end.

and consequences in so far as foreseen.

(2.) Many *unforeseen*, and therefore *unintended* consequences. Every action has accompaniments and results which the agent did not *foresee* nor expect, and which therefore did not enter into his *intention*, especially when they extend forward into the remote future, as the consequences of many actions do.

(2) Results unforeseen and therefore not intended.

§ 18. Thus the willing of a particular end generally includes the willing of several subordinate ends as means, which are willed and intended not for their own sake, but for the sake of the main end of which they are the necessary conditions. Hence the *intention* may be said to be a complex volition containing several subordinate volitions within it—*viz.*, the willing of the principal end for its own sake, and of the means or auxiliary ends not for their own sake but for that of the main end.

Complexity of voluntary actions—ends within ends—volitions within volitions.

Thus the object desired and aimed at by a man may be the obtaining of a sum of money, or of a royal crown, and the gratifications which the money or the throne may give him. The means of attaining this end, however, may be robbery or murder; and though these may be undesirable in themselves he may will them, and undertake them, as means or subordinate ends for the sake of the main end.

Examples.

Thus the main *end* and the means or auxiliary ends will both be included in his *intention*. But the carrying out of his intention may have ulterior consequences which he did not contemplate beforehand nor intend, *e.g.*, constant terror of detection, and finally trial, and imprisonment or death.

Hierarchy  
of ends.

From this we can understand the extreme complexity of conduct. Not only does every voluntary action involve a series of steps from inception to completion; but one action either includes others within it as its means, or is included under another more complex action as factor of a system. The attainment of an end may be impossible without the attainment of means, and the means have to be raised into subordinate ends requiring intermediate actions for their attainment. And in willing the main end we will the means, so that the main volition contains several or many subordinate volitions within it—the main end supposes several or many subordinate ends as auxiliary to it.

Thus we may speak of a *hierarchy* of ends—of ends which are willed as means to other ends, while these are willed as means towards a still higher one. And practical wisdom consists in regulating our present actions so as to be means conducive to higher future ends; and in a well-regulated life, all other ends will be subordinated to some one ultimate end or highest good, the nature of which it is the business of ethical science to determine.

Consequent  
difficulty of  
judging  
actions.

It is this inclusion of volitions within volitions, of ends under ends, that makes the moral judgment of actions to be sometimes so difficult. The higher end may be good in itself, when considered in the abstract, and apart from its means. The means or subordinate ends again, considered apart from the

higher end, may be evil. Hence the question arises, whether the end ever justifies the means—whether we can pronounce the complex action right as a whole, though the subordinate actions, the means used, are evil in themselves.

**VI. Springs of Action.** § 19. Having considered the distinguishing characteristics of voluntary action, we go back to consider more minutely its origin and first inception within the mind—the mental state which gives rise to it—because we cannot judge the moral quality of an action without taking into consideration its ultimate source and motive. We have to consider therefore the *springs* and *motives* of rational action. By spring of action, or motive force, is meant what sets anything acting, as the water sets the mill-wheel revolving, the wind sets the boat going, the explosion sets the bullet flying. But we have to deal here, not with physical movements impelled mechanically by forces acting on things from without; but with voluntary actions, which are set going by ideas, feelings, and desires, springing up within the mind itself, and are adapted to the attainment of some end and filling up of some want felt by the mind itself, so that their springs or motives are always something mental.

All actions have springs or causes.

Voluntary actions spring from something within the mind.

What, then, are the *springs* and *motives* of our voluntary actions? We might answer that it is our *self* that sets our actions going, and is therefore the spring and motive force of action. This is indeed true so far, but it only carries the question a step further back, as the question now comes to be: what is it that *prompts* or *moves* the

Out of what then do they spring?

*self* to act, and to act in one way rather than another?

Three phases  
of voluntary  
action.

Now we shall be better able to understand what is meant by motive and spring of action, if we refer again to the different stages or phases through which every voluntary action passes, from its first inception to its completion. Thus we have found that every voluntary action passes through three principal stages—

Mental.

(1.) The *subjective stage*, or the states and processes of mind in the course of which the action is first *thought* of, *designed*, and *determined on*—the mental sources of the action—its earliest phase or stage thus lying within the mind itself, and including the *idea* or *end* and the *desire* of realizing it, the *deliberation*, and the final *resolution* ;

Organic.

(2.) The *muscular movements*, in which it passes from the mind into the body (so to speak), and manifests itself in bodily movements—including all the physical work that has to be done in order that the results may be attained at which the action aims ;

Extra-orga-  
nic.

(3.) And finally, the *results* or *effects* produced (commonly outside the body), including (*i*) foreseen and intended results—both those foreseen and desired for their own sake (the *end* or purpose aimed at), and those desired and intended indeed, but only as means and conditions of the former ; and (*ii*) many accidental and ulterior ones not foreseen nor intended.

Where then  
is the ulti-  
mate spring

§ 20. Where, then, in this series of phases through which an action passes are we to look for its *spring* and *motive*? As voluntary action is

a mental product, we must obviously look for its spring in its first or mental phase. Which of the elements contained in that stage, then, are we to regard as its ultimate spring? The act of determination or volition itself cannot be what we are in search of, because the spring or motive is what moves or induces the self to deliberate and will, and must therefore be something *antecedent* to the volition strictly so called.

or source to  
be found?

Now, if we trace back far enough the impulse to act, we find that it always originates in a feeling, and that that feeling is a feeling of uneasiness or pain rising out of some want or imperfection, whether actually *present*, or only anticipated and therefore *ideal*. For all conation is striving, and all striving is to overcome some pain, or remedy some want; and without want or imperfection to be overcome there would be no occasion for action—nothing to act for. And the feelings out of which the action arises will be either (1) *present sense-feelings of pain and discomfort*, or (2) *emotions and sentiments* rising out of the *thought of future pains, wants, defects and dangers* of self, or (3) out of the thought of present or future wants and sufferings of *other persons*, made ours by sympathy.

"In feeling of  
want and  
imperfection.

We conclude, therefore, that every action has its *spring* in a disagreeable feeling of *pain, want, defect*, requiring to be overcome, and impelling the self to action in order to overcome it.

It is to be borne in mind, however, that the wants and pains which give rise to actions need not be *actual*, but may be only *ideal*. In animals, all actions doubtless spring out of actual present feelings of uneasiness, as hunger and thirst. But rational beings "look before and after," and represent in

Actual or  
only ideal.

idea future needs and pains of self, and both present and future ones of others. Hence their springs are more frequently *ideal* pains than actually present ones.

Which impels to action in various ways.

But feelings of pain and want impel to action, it may be observed, in two ways which require to be distinguished, because they give two very different kinds of action:—

To reflex and instinctive action,

(a) They may impel to action in a more or less *automatic* way, *viz.*, to *spontaneous, reflex, instinctive* action, without any explicit idea of an *end* or *object* which will relieve the uneasiness or supply the want—tending towards such an end indeed, but without any consciousness of it (instinct). Such action is *conation* or *effort* indeed (in the widest sense of the word), but not the kind with which we have to deal in ethics.

As in animals.

This is the way in which springs of actions operate in animals. Animals have feelings of want, and act so as to relieve them, but they do so without any understanding of the needs which cause these feelings, or of the means by which they may be overcome; and by an automatically working association between the feelings and the actions which they have inherited from ancestors.

To voluntary action in rational beings.

(b) They may suggest to the mind an *idea* of some *means*, some *state* or *object*, which when attained will remove the disagreeable sensation by filling up the want or defect. Or the idea of some absent good may awake the mind to a consciousness of its own imperfection in wanting that good, and set it thinking about the means of attaining it. Now this object, absent in actuality and present only in idea, gives rise to the intermediate state of mind (intermediate between feeling and volition), called *desire*, and thereby becomes a conscious *end*.

of action ; and action for realizing a foreseen and desired *end* or *purpose* is *purposive, intentional, voluntary* action in the strict sense ; and it is with action of this kind that we have to do in ethics.

From the above analysis then it would appear that all voluntary action has its source in feeling of want and imperfection, and therefore in pain. This conclusion has been used by pessimistic philosophers to prove that all consciousness is essentially painful, pleasure only a temporary relief from pain, happiness only a deceitful illusion, and conscious life therefore not a good, but an evil. "All willing rises from want and therefore from deficiency, and therefore from suffering." Pleasure consists in the satisfaction of wants, but every satisfied want is swallowed up and lost in a multitude of unsatisfied ones, so that no permanent satisfaction, and therefore no real happiness, is possible. "The satisfaction of one wish ends it; yet for one wish that is satisfied there remain at least ten which are denied. Further, the desire lasts long, the demands are infinite, but the satisfaction is scanty and short. And even the final satisfaction is only apparent; every satisfied wish only makes room for a new one, and both are illusions. No attained object of desire can give lasting satisfaction; it is like the alms thrown to a beggar, which helps to keep him alive to-day that his misery may be prolonged till to-morrow" (Schopenhauer). Therefore the happiness which all pursue is an illusion, as treacherous as the wandering bog-fire which leads the traveller on to "dusty death."

This pessimistic conclusion, however, is not really warranted by its premises. In the higher forms, at least, of mental life—in rational beings—the wants and pains which impel to action are for the larger part anticipated ones, and present only in idea. But *ideal* pains are not the same as actual ones; and the satisfaction of wants, which is something *real*, forms a much larger element in conscious life than the pains of want, which are mostly only ideal. In other words, the enjoyment of fulfilled needs is

Conclusions drawn from this by pessimistic philosophers.

Pain, the only *positive* state.

Pleasure, only *negative*.

Not really warranted.



Happiness  
more truly  
positive than  
pain.

not negated wholly by the pain of new wants, because the one is *real* and the other oftener only in *idea*. And indeed the mere *hope* and *anticipated* satisfaction of filling up a want may exceed the actual pain of the want itself.

Distinction  
of spring  
and motive.

§ 21. The above distinction between automatic and purposive action will enable us to make a distinction between *spring* and *motive* of action? All actions have *springs*, but only purposive ones have *motives*.

All actions, both *automatic* and *purposive*, have their ultimate source in feelings of *pain*, *uneasiness* or *want*; because all actions are efforts to overcome or avoid such feelings. Therefore feelings of pain and want are the ultimate springs of all the conscious actions of living creatures. But these springs of action operate in different ways—

All actions  
have  
springs.

(1) In those primitive forms of action which we have called automatic they give rise either to *spasmodic* and *reflex* movements such as the rolling and muttering of the infant when pleased, the gambols of the young animal, the starting when struck or frightened, the struggles of a creature in pain; or to the series of combined movements adapted to definite ends by inherited connections between feelings and actions, without prevision or intention, which are called *instinctive*. Such actions have springs, but not what we understand by *motives* in the narrower sense in which the word is commonly used.

Only volun-  
tary ones  
have  
motives.

(2) But in *voluntary* actions the feeling of uneasiness and want rises through thought to the form of *desire*, i.e., it raises the *idea* of something which if attained would relieve the want, and thereby

the longing and yearning to realize that idea, or attain that end, in order to supply the want (desire being the compound state of mind arising from a *feeling of want*, an *idea* of something which would fill up the want, and a *longing* or *incipient impulse* to supply the want by realizing the idea).

Now the desire of attaining the end is the motive force (figuratively speaking) which prompts the self to act in this particular way ; and action thus prompted by the desire of a foreseen end is *voluntary* or *purposive* action proper (as distinguished from automatic and instinctive).

Because  
motive in-  
cludes idea  
and desire.

Thus, though all actions have *springs*, only voluntary actions, strictly speaking, have *motives*. The ultimate spring of every action (coming within the sphere of conscious mind at least) is feeling, involving pain, uneasiness, want. But in the case of voluntary action there intervenes another phase between the spring and the volition, *viz.*, the state of desire containing the idea of end ; and this state is what should be called the motive, because it *moves* the self to *will* this particular action.

The distinction also between *motive* and *intention* will be obvious from what has been said. The motive is the desire of attaining a particular end. But we intend both to attain the end and to perform the means and undergo the foreseen conditions and consequences of attaining it, whether desirable in themselves or not.

Thus a person may have a diseased limb which endangers life, and may resolve to have it amputated. Here his motive is the desire of preserving his life. But his intention includes not only this, but also the suffering of the operation, and the inconveniences of having to limp on a crutch ever after.

A classifica-  
tion of  
springs cor-  
responds to  
a classifica-  
tion of  
wants, and  
therefore of  
feelings.

## VII. Clas- sification of springs of action.

§ 22. Thus all actions have their springs in feelings, and all feelings are capable of becoming springs of action ; because they are all capable

of being pleasurable or painful, and thereby of giving rise to wants, and to action for overcoming them. For when a feeling is disagreeable, it expresses a want or defect, and whatever will remove it is felt as a *need*, and thereby becomes an object of *desire*. When it is agreeable, it expresses the acquisition of some good, and the absence of it is felt as a *want*, and whatever will renew it becomes an object of desire and motive of action.

Thus a classification of the *impulses* or *springs of action* is practically identical with a classification of the *wants* of human nature ; and that again is practically identical with a classification of the *feelings*, because every feeling may in some relation (by its presence or absence) give rise to a want and desire.

And wants  
may be  
classified  
according  
to their  
origin.

Now the feelings, and therefore the possible wants and springs of action, may be classified roughly according to the objects which give rise to them ; and are found to centre round three principal objects—the wants of *self*, the wants of *other persons*, and the *ideals* of the true, beautiful, and good—giving *egoistic*, *altruistic*, and *ideal* springs and motives of action.

The first two classes may also be said to be *personal* in the sense that they rise out of the needs, and impel directly towards the good, of particular persons. The third class may be called *impersonal* or *abstract*, because they spring from the consideration of abstract *principles* and *ideals* or general

ideas of good, with reference only implicitly and indirectly to particular persons. Thus :—

§ 23. (A) The *personal springs* and *motives* of action will be those rising directly out of the wants and imperfections of particular persons, and will include—

(A)  
Wants rising out of particular circumstances of particular persons.

I. *The egoistic or prudential class of springs* and *desires*, which arise from feeling and thinking about the physical pains, wants, and imperfections of one's self; and impel one to act (*automatically* in reflex and instinctive action, and *purposively* in rational action) for his own preservation, gratification, and self-interest. These, again, will include those primary and natural feelings of want which are directly essential to the health and preservation of the system, and are therefore present from the beginning; and those secondary wants and inclinations which are afterwards acquired (artificially) by experience and habit. First therefore come,

I.  
Those rising out of the circumstances of self.

(a) The *primary impulses*, which will include again (1) *primary propensions* or *appetites*, making us strive towards those things which are necessary for the well-being of the physical system. Periodically recurring states and wants of the physical organism occasion a class of uneasy feelings of want, which give rise to impulses or propensions towards the things which are necessary to supply these wants, and to promote the health and development of the physical system. And these impulses are at first guided into the right channels to produce the right actions by *instinct*, or *connate pre-adaptation* (though less perfectly in man than in animals); but afterwards come to manifest themselves under

Natural propensions towards things.

the form of conscious desires guided by *intelligence* into the right movements, and towards the right objects.

Such are the natural cravings for food and drink, fresh air, and physical activity, as necessary to the support and healthy working of the physical system. And

Natural repulsions away from things.

(2) *Primary repulsions*, or natural *aversions*, making us shrink away from certain things ; as every creature is endowed more or less with natural tendencies to *reject*, *ward off*, or *suppress* physical pains, and whatever is prejudicial to the physical system ; whence such feelings as—

*Antipathy* towards things having the property of causing pain, as nauseous tastes, grating sounds, noxious animals, and dangerous persons, prompting one to avoid such persons and things ;

*Resentment*, *anger*, or *indignation* towards persons who have done harm unjustly, prompting to action for defence or retaliation ;

And *fear*, roused by the thought of future injury, and prompting to action for self-preservation. Out of these primary impulses will spring—

Acquired propensions.

(b) The *secondary* and *acquired* desires.—Many of our wants and cravings are less fundamental and essential than the above, and may be said to be *acquired* in the sense that they rise out of the special circumstances under which we have been placed, and the habits of self-indulgence which we have acquired more or less *artificially*. Thus we have—

(1) Acquired or secondary *propensions* or *appetites*. Objects of appetite are at first sought only because they are necessary for the welfare of the system. But they are found to give pleasure, and hence come to be sought, not because necessary to the system, but for the sake of the sensuous pleasure which they give. Hence the *love*

*of luxury, i. e.*, of foods and drinks, fine garments, fine dwellings, and the like ; artificial *appetites* such as love of tobacco, alcohol, and the like ; *love of particular forms of physical exercise*, such as walking, riding, hunting, travel, for the sake of the pleasure which they give ; love of *gain, wealth, power*, at first as supplying the means of luxury, but at last for their own sakes (raised from being *means* merely into *ends* by transference of interest).

(2) And we may add, acquired *repulsions* also, *viz.*, such feelings as *censoriousness, suspiciousness, and vindictiveness*, which seem to imply acquired habits of finding fault with others, suspecting evil of others, and inflicting pain on others, and a tendency therefore to derive selfish pleasure from doing so—the *malevolent* impulses.

Acquired  
repulsions.

The primary and acquired propensions, and aversions, it will be seen, are the most frequently recurring motives, and the lives of many are regulated mainly by them. Above these come

§ 24. II. *The altruistic, disinterested, social feelings or affections*, founded upon *sympathy*, or the power of entering into the feelings and sharing in the pleasures and pains of others, and feeling the wants of others as wants of self—thereby prompting individuals to identify their own interests with those of their fellow-men, and promote the good of others as if it were their own, and in many cases to sacrifice ease, comfort, profit, and even life for others.

II. Those  
rising out of  
the wants of  
other  
persons.

These are the feelings which draw persons together by the ties of mutual affection and sympathy, and form the bonds which bind together the different classes of society—the family, the community, the tribe and nation, the brotherhood of humanity—and confer on mankind the benefits of intercourse, mutual help, and division of labour.

Affections  
and social  
feelings.

Essential to  
the higher  
development  
of mankind.

Being thus essential to the perfection, and indeed to the very existence of the human race, it is natural that the essential altruistic impulses should be instinctive and innate in human nature from the beginning. It is not for their own pleasure merely that the mother loves and provides for the child, and that the soldier sacrifices his limbs or his life in battle. They are each obeying an instinctive impulse, which is essential not only to the good of humanity, but also to the perfection of their own natures individually; and though they find, for that reason, a kind of satisfaction in their self-sacrifice, they are not consciously aiming at their own pleasure as their end. Their conduct is essentially disinterested; and though disinterested conduct often brings happiness to self, it is by aiming at the happiness of others.

Both  
attractive

The sympathetic feelings and impulses are numerous, but not easy to discriminate. They include *affections* or *attractions* such as the *parental* and *family* affections, *friendship* and the many kinds of *social affection*, *pity* and *compassion* for suffering, *philanthropy* and *patriotism*, *generosity* and *gratitude*.

And re-  
pellent.

The primary and natural *repulsions* or *aversions* such as *antipathy*, *resentment* and *anger* and *fear*, reappear under this head also, because they may be disinterested in their source, *viz.*, when excited by thinking of injury and injustice done to others, and the dangers of others, not of self.

An interme-  
diate class—  
tendencies  
to do good  
to others  
that others  
may do good  
to us in re-  
turn.

But midway between egoistic and altruistic, prudential and benevolent impulses, there are also some which impel people to do good to others in order that others may do good to them in return, and which may therefore be called *ego-altruistic*,—altruistic in promoting the good of others, but egoistic in the sense of aiming ultimately at the good of self. And some have gone so far as to argue

that there are really no purely disinterested impulses, but that all are really only ego-altruistic at most, aiming at the good of others merely as a necessary means to the good of self (*e.g.*, Hobbes, Bentham, and those who hold the egoistic theory of ethics). But such a theory is evidently based on false psychology.

It is true however that feelings at first purely altruistic may assume a more or less egoistic character. Occasions for the exercise of sympathy and compassion may come to be sought not for the good of their objects so much as for the pleasure which the exercise of them gives the agent himself. Hence disinterested pity may change into what is commonly called *sentimentality*,—the tendency to seek, create, or imagine objects of sympathy and compassion, and to work up these feelings in the mind artificially where there is no sufficient occasion for them, and for the sake of the peculiar kind of gratification derived from the exercise of them; as when people make themselves believe in cases of suffering and injustice which have no real existence, and take pleasure in giving trifling or imaginary relief. In such cases affection evidently loses its disinterested character, and becomes secondary and egoistic.

Sentimentality.

§ 25. (B) Finally, we have those emotions which may be called *impersonal* or *abstract*, because excited not by thinking of the circumstances and interests of any particular person, self or others, but of *general principles* and *ideal standards of perfection* as being good and desirable in themselves—the ideally true, beautiful, and good.

They imply a comparison between the actual qualities of things and persons and ideals of what they should be, and a consequent feeling of their imperfection and longing for the realization of the ideal. These feelings, therefore, suppose highly developed powers of abstract thought, and therefore belong to the maturest stage of mental development,

(B)  
Wants rising out of general principles and ideals of excellence.



both of the individual and of the race; and manifest the natural and instinctive striving of the soul towards spiritual development and perfection.

Now this natural striving of the soul towards the ideal as conceived by reason is seen—

Intellectual  
perfection.

(i) *In intellectual sentiments*, such as wonder, curiosity, and love of knowledge. The mind finds that there are regions of truth (things, forces, causes) lying beyond the range of its ideas, and containing the unknown springs and causes from which known phenomena flow; and, feeling the limitation of its ideas as an imperfection, is depressed by it, and struggles towards extension of its ideas, and harmony between ideas and reality, as towards an ideal of perfection.

Æsthetic  
perfection.

(ii) *In æsthetic sentiment*, or admiration for the beautiful in nature and art. Some sensible things impress the mind with their beauty; others with their deformity. The former impress it also with a conviction that they are as they should be, *i.e.*, agree with their ideal, and thereby produce a feeling of elation and satisfaction; the latter, on the contrary, with a consciousness of their imperfection, and therefore with a feeling of dissatisfaction, rousing an impulse to overcome the imperfection of things by realizing in them the mind's own ideal of the beautiful. Hence the natural impulse to surround one's self with what is beautiful in nature and art. And—

Moral  
perfection.

(iii) *In moral sentiment, conscience*, or feeling of *reverence* for what is discerned through reason to be good and perfect in the conduct and character of rational beings—producing the feeling of, and impulse towards *justice* and *righteousness* in

the exercise of the other motives—in other words, the *regulative* or *normative* motive which subordinates and regulates all the rest.

Moral judgment begins as an individual judgment, or intuition of the moral worth of individual actions. But a general idea or *ideal* of moral excellence is soon evolved by exercise of reason, and impresses the mind with a feeling of reverence and aspiration, and presents itself as a standard with which particular actions and characters are to be compared, and according to which they are to be judged.

The moral ideal.

But the self, being essentially a principle of activity striving to work out its own realization and perfection, feels instinctively that its highest perfection consists in perfection of free activity—*i.e.*, in perfection of will, or of that central activity which consists in regulating, or using rightly, the subordinate intellectual and physical powers which are under its control.

Ultimately identical with perfect will.

Hence what we have spoken of as moral perfection and the moral ideal is equivalent to the ideal of a "*perfect will*." This is higher than intellectual and physical perfection, because will-activity (being the activity which consists in regulating activities) is the fundamental and essential activity of the rational ego, *expressing* its essential nature more than any subordinate activity does. Animals have physical, and to some extent intellectual activities, but only man has will, or power of *self-determining self-regulating activity*. The perfect will is, therefore, the highest possible object of aspiration to every rational being.

To which all other faculties are auxiliary.

Hence above all the other impulses or springs of

action will stand *conscience* or the *moral sentiment of reverence* (1) for the moral ideal which reason holds up before the mind, and (2) for those concrete personalities in whom it is approximately realized, and (3) finally for the supreme personality who is its complete realization, *viz.*, God—impelling the individual to realize that ideal in his own life.

The spring which regulates other springs.

It can be understood from this that *conscience* or reverence for good is not a spring of action on the same level with the other springs, but stands apart from, and above the others. There is no special class of actions which consist in *revering* and nothing more. Moral feeling manifests itself, therefore, not in any particular class of actions, but in prompting us to regulate our other springs—to prefer the right and reject the wrong; tending thus to unify all the activities of life and make them converge towards one highest good.

Meaning of moral consciousness.

### VIII. The Moral Consciousness.

§ 26. Having considered the elements of mind which are connected with voluntary action we proceed next to distinguish those which are most closely connected with the judgment of actions as good or bad, right or wrong, and which therefore require special consideration in moral science; in other words, what may be called the *moral* elements of consciousness. The *moral* consciousness therefore is a collective term for *the conscious states and processes, simultaneous and successive, which pass through the mind when we think of a particular line of action as being right or wrong, e. g., when we say that it is right for us to keep our word, and wrong to break it—that it is right to avoid inflicting useless pain on a fellow-being—that it is wrong to appropriate our employer's money, but right to use*

the proceeds of our own labour. Thus the judgment of the act as right or wrong will itself rise out of certain cognitions, ideas and feelings, and will itself again give rise to other feelings and ideas; and these feelings and ideas out of which the judgment rises and which rise out of the judgment, will be what is meant by the *moral* elements of *consciousness*. When we judge our own conduct, we experience this series of conscious states and processes as they go on within our own minds *before, during* and *after* the action; and when we judge the actions of others, we conceive ourselves in their position, and experience the same series of states and processes in an ideal form—imagining how we should ourselves think and feel in the same circumstances.

Now ethical psychology has to analyse this complex tissue of moral consciousness into its constituent elements, and determine their precise nature and relation to each other.

What we have to do here, then, is to distinguish the main results of such an ethical analysis; and can do so best by referring as before to *the successive phases in the development of a voluntary* action, from its first inception in the mind to its ultimate consequences to self and others, distinguishing the elements of ideation, cognition, emotion and desire which are involved in them; and observing especially where the judgment of rightness or wrongness comes in, and the feelings which it gives rise to. Now it will be convenient to distinguish between (A) those which rise in the mind before the performance of the action, *i. e.*, while it is still in its mental phase, and (B) those

It includes ideas and feelings before and after the action.

which rise in the mind after its performance, *viz.*, from thinking of the past action and its consequences. Hence—

§ 27. (A) We have to consider first those which rise in the mind while the action is still in inception and contemplation; and under this head we have to consider—

(A)  
While the  
action is in  
contempla-  
tion.

I. The *origin* and *spring* of the action, which involves these mental facts—

Spring of  
action.

(i) The idea of some thing or state which it is in our power to attain, and which, if actually attained, would give us satisfaction, and which becomes the *end* or *object* of our action.

Idea.

(ii) A *feeling of defect and want*, which arises from the consciousness that this pleasure-giving thing or state is absent from us in *actuality* and present only in *idea*; and from anticipation of the satisfaction which we should derive from its realization.

Feeling.

Of these two factors the idea may come first and give rise to the consciousness of want, or the feeling of want itself may come first and suggest the idea of what will relieve it.

(iii) Next, the idea and the feeling of want suggesting or rising out of it give rise to the mental state called *desire*; which therefore supposes the idea of something which we *need to supply a want*, and consists in a concentration of the mind upon the idea, and a state of longing and inward striving towards its realization; and is, in fact, *nascent* or *incipient* activity for realizing the desired end, though still restrained by rival desires with which it may be inconsistent.

Desire.

The idea, want and desire are so closely depen-

dent on each other that they form one complex mental state, and may be described as the *motive*, or that which moves and impels one to act.

II. Next follows the *judgment* of the anticipated action as right or wrong in itself, and better or worse than alternative lines of action. A desire or motive—a desirable end and line of action—is never single; there are always several present to the mind at once. It is always open to us to do this particular action, or not to do it; or of two alternative actions we may be free to do the one or the other. The desire of regulating our conduct rightly compels us to consider these possible lines of action, together with their probable results and consequences to ourselves and others; and *deliberate* and *judge* whether it is better to do or not to do a particular action, or to do one action rather than another.

Judgment of  
action.

Now the judging of things as better or worse supposes *standards of goodness before the mind's eye*, according to which they may be judged. And the standards according to which we judge actions may, for ethical purposes, be considered as two—

Standards of  
judgment.

(i) The standard of *utility* or *expediency*—one action may be more productive of *gain*, and thereby of *pleasure* or *happiness* than another; and this quality of tending to profit and pleasure is called the *militarian* or *hedonistic* standard (which again may be *egoistic*, or *altruistic*, according as the gain or pleasure aimed at is that of self or others).

Utility.

(ii) The standard of *morality* or *rightness*—an action has the quality of being *right* or *wrong in itself* independently of its power of producing gain or pleasure; and this rightness, which we dis-

Morality.

cern to be inherent in the nature of the action, independent of its pleasure-giving quality, we call its *moral quality*.

Utilitarian  
and moral  
judgment.

Hence, after thinking over all the circumstances and consequences of the action, we judge it to be higher or lower, better or worse, than its alternatives according to these two standards of goodness—*utility* and *morality*, *usefulness* and *rightness*. And judging one action better than others according to the standard of utility is the *utilitarian* or *prudential* judgment; while judging one better than others according to the standard of moral rightness is the *moral judgment proper*.

This phase, therefore, raises the questions of the nature of the *moral judgment*, of the *faculty* which judges, and of the *standard* according to which it judges; which are the questions round which ethical inquiry chiefly centres, as the answers to all other questions are more or less directly dependent on these.

Feelings  
rising out of  
the judgment.

III. Then follow a number of *convictions*, *ideas*, and *feelings* which rise out of the moral judgment as its mental consequences. When we thus judge an action to be right in relation to us, we at the same time perceive and feel that we *ought* to do it, or that it is our *duty* to do it, or that we are under an *obligation* to do it. Thus our moral consciousness includes, along with the idea of rightness, also the idea of *oughtness*, *duty* or *obligation*, which the idea of rightness always brings with it, but which is at least *logically distinguishable* from it.

Duty.

Hence another ethical question is: what makes certain actions to be *obligatory* on us, or to be our *duty*? and what is the relation of the obligatori-

ness of actions to their rightness?

Some moralists have regarded the discerning of duty as a distinct judgment from that of rightness, following upon it but requiring separate explanation; while others regard oughtness or obligatoriness as only another aspect of rightness, so that the judgments of rightness and oughtness are but two aspects of the same judgment.

And the cognition of rightness and duty raises the fundamental moral sentiment of *reverence* for ideal goodness and perfection, and thereby preference for this particular line of action as consistent with the ideal.

Reverence.

IV. • Next comes the phase of *volition proper*. Having deliberated and judged which of the possible lines of action (considered along with what are foreseen to be its conditions and consequences) is the best according to the standards of rightness and utility, we *decide between them* according to one or other of these standards. We may resolve to throw ourselves into the realization of the more pleasure-giving, ignoring perhaps its moral wrongness; or of the morally right line, ignoring its consequences to profit or pleasure. Or the two kinds of goodness may happen to coincide, *i. e.*, the action which is most profitable may at the same time be the one which is morally right.

Volition or self-determination.

~~Volition, therefore,~~ consists essentially in this *self-determining*, or identifying of one's self with one out of several possible ends and lines of action, after judging it to be the best according to some standard of worth, whether prudential or moral—that of utility or that of rightness.

Having been thus determined or resolved upon with all its results and consequences so far as fore-



Complex  
volition,  
intention,  
resolution.

seen and willed, the action passes into the phase of resolution and intention, i. e., though it is still only in the mind, we intend to carry it out as soon as circumstances are favourable.

And when the time comes, the complex volition or intention passes over into the movements required to carry it out ; and the movements produce (generally) the results and consequences which were intended ; and thus the action finally becomes complete—after passing through the phases of *idea* and *desire*, *judgment* and *determination*, *intention* and *movement*, and finally *results* and *consequences* to self and others.

§ 28. (B) Lastly we have to consider those feelings which are roused in the mind after the performance of the action by thinking of the past action and its consequences. When we do a right action in obedience to our sense of duty, then we have a feeling of *self-approbation*, or of being blameless and deserving well, or of having merit or good desert for having done our duty ; and when we have acted contrary to our judgment of right and sense of duty, we have feelings of *self-disapprobation*, ill-desert, demerit, of guilt or sin, and of remorse. And the feeling of disapprobation, demerit, or guilt carries with it the feeling of responsibility, or liability to punishment for what we have done.

Approbation,  
guilt, re-  
morse, res-  
ponsibility.

The above is a psychological analysis of the main mental constituents involved in the development of a voluntary action ; and we can see that the constituents belonging more especially to the *ethical* or *moral* problem are the moral standard and judgment together with the faculty which judges, the conviction of duty or obligation and sentiment of reverence which accompanies the judgment, and the

sentiments of merit and guilt and conviction of responsibility which follow the action.

These, therefore, are specially the contents of moral consciousness, and the special objects of ethical study. The other constituents enumerated belong rather to psychology alone. And of these constituents some, it will be seen, are intellectual and some are emotional. The intellectual ones will require further consideration afterwards, under *moral judgment*. As for the emotional ones or *moral sentiments*, some questions connected with these may be further considered here, under the "psychology of ethics."

### IX. Moral Sentiment.

§ 29. We have considered the successive conscious processes which pass through the mind in the course of a voluntary action, from its ultimate source in idea to its final completion in external results and consequences. And we have found that the elements requiring special consideration in ethics (the constituents of moral consciousness proper) are the *desire* or *motive*, the *judgment* with its *standard* or *ideal*, and the *faculty* which judges, *reverence* for the ideal, *duty* or *obligation*, *merit* and *guilt*, *responsibility*, *self-satisfaction* and *remorse*.

Now of these elements of the moral consciousness some obviously belong to the *intellectual* side of our mind, and some to the *emotional* side—i.e., to feeling or sentiment. But there has been considerable difference of opinion among ethical thinkers as to the comparative importance ethically of the intellectual and the emotional elements—some making moral judgment to be determined

Feeling as  
an element  
of moral  
conscious-  
ness.

Is intellect  
or feeling  
the more  
important  
constituent?

mainly by emotions or sentiments, excited by the consideration of actions (the *sentimental* or *moral-sense* system of ethics); and others making it to depend wholly on ideas and cognitions of the intellect, independent of any element of feeling (the *intellectual* system). Hence we have to inquire :—

1. *What is meant by sentiment in general?*

Meanings of sentiment.

(a) The term is sometimes used for any kind of emotion, or feeling excited not directly by impressions made on the organism from without (*i.e.*, *peripherally* excited), but by ideas and processes of ideation, thought and reasoning, going on within the mind (*i.e.*, *centrally* excited), like fear, hope, jealousy, wonder, and so on.

(a)  
For emotion in general.

Especially compassion.

Thus the word sentiment is used sometimes vaguely for emotion of any kind; and very often for the kind of emotion which we call *pity*, *compassion*, *sympathy*, or the power of entering into the minds of other people, and sharing in their feelings, especially in their pains and pleasures; and one moral theory identifies moral sentiment wholly with *sympathy*, *viz.*, that of Adam Smith (in his "Theory of Moral Sentiments"), making moral judgment to be founded on sympathy, pity, compassion, fellow-feeling, or power of feeling the pleasure or pain which our actions will give to others.

(b)  
For emotions rising out of the contemplation of ideals of excellence.

(b) But the term is often used for a still more special kind of emotion. We form in our minds *ideals of perfection*,—an *intellectual ideal*, or ideal of perfect wisdom and knowledge; an *aesthetic ideal*, or ideal of what is beautiful in nature and art; and a *moral ideal*, or ideal of what is perfectly good in conduct and character. Now the consideration of these ideals excites *certain kinds of emotion in our minds*, such as feelings of admiration, liking,

and longing to attain these ideals, and realize them in our own life and surroundings—to become perfectly wise, perfectly good and noble, and to surround ourselves with beautiful things.

Now the feelings of liking and longing which we have for these ideals (for knowledge, the beautiful, and the morally good) are what are now commonly called the *sentiments*—*intellectual*, *aesthetic*, and *moral*—which are therefore the highest and most refined class of the emotions.

2. Hence if we take sentiment in this last sense of feeling for the ideally perfect, *moral sentiment* proper will include as already explained—

(1) The emotion of *reverence* which we cannot help feeling for the ideal of moral perfection, and for *God* especially as that in which the ideal is fully realized and for *persons* in proportion as it is approximately realized in them, and for *rightness* and *duty* wherever presented to us in action, and the *longing* and *aspiration* to realize the ideal in our character and life ; and

(2) The *dislike* and *disgust* which we feel towards what is mean, cruel or unjust in the conduct of others, and the *shame*, *guilt* and *remorse* which we feel when such conduct is our own.

These emotions springing up in connection with the moral judgment, and in contemplating what is good or bad in our own conduct and character, and those of others are what are called the *moral sentiments*.

(30) § 30. We may here point out also that the differences of opinion referred to above, as to how much of the moral consciousness consists of feeling (sentiment), and how much of intellection, have led to two somewhat divergent accounts of the

Including moral sentiment—the emotions rising out of the judgment and contemplation of moral good and bad.

Comparative importance of intellect and sentiment.

moral judgment itself, as will have to be noticed afterwards.

Moral sentiment made to be the ground of moral judgment.

(i) The *moral-sense* or sentiment theory makes the element of sentiment to be more fundamental than the intellectual ones, and explains moral judgment as determined by the feeling or sentiment which actions excite in our minds.

We are so constituted that consideration of the action in connexion with all its relations and circumstances produces a kind of feeling or sentiment in us—we do not know how nor why. In some cases it is a disagreeable feeling of dislike, disgust and aversion; and because of it, we judge the action to be wrong—so that a wrong action may be defined as one which produces in us this sentiment of dislike and disgust. In other cases the action produces in us a feeling of liking, admiration, and approval, on account of which we pronounce the action to be right. In other words the feeling comes first, and the judgment is based on it.

Our judgment of the rightness and wrongness of actions is thus made to depend on the feelings which they produce in us, as our judgment of the qualities of external things depends on the sensations which they occasion in us, so that the moral feeling is sensation rather than emotion.

Moral judgment made to be the ground of moral sentiment.

(ii) The intellectual system, on the contrary, makes the intellectual elements to be the more fundamental, and the moral judgment to be determined by purely intellectual processes, and to depend—

(a) Either on an intellectual discerning of ~~relations and proportions between the antecedent circumstances and the consequences of every action~~—the agent's relations to other persons before

the action, and his relations after the action ; because every action changes the agent's relations to other beings, and we may seek to define the rightness or wrongness of an action by something in the change of relations (called the *intuitional* or formal view of the judgment) ;

(*b*) Or on the forming, by exercise of reason, of an idea of an ultimate end and highest good, so as to consist in judging, by exercise of reason, what lines of action are consistent with, or conducive to this highest good, and therefore right (called the teleological or *idealist* view of the judgment).

Thus, according to the moral-sense view the sentiment goes before the judgment and determines it ; according to the intellectual, the judgment comes first, and the sentiment afterwards as a consequence of the judgment.

**X.**  
**Character.** § 31. We can see that different springs of action predominate in different persons. One person may surrender himself largely to egoistic gratifications of sense, or to pride, vanity, ambition ; in another sympathetic and social feelings may predominate ; and others are interested mainly in intellectual or æsthetic pursuits. In some moral sentiment dominates and regulates all the other springs of action ; in some it seems to be largely obscured and suppressed by the egoistic desires. Such differences among the prevailing springs of actions of different persons are spoken of as differences of character ; and the object of ethics is sometimes said to be to determine what is good and bad in the characters of men. The chief question with regard to it therefore is : how one class of springs comes to predominate over others, so as

Character consists in the predominance of certain springs of action.

How is this predominance brought about ?

to constitute the person's general disposition or character; and the question is one that belongs to the psychology of ethics. We can understand it best by help of the following considerations.

The individual a centre of many relations.

Hence many wants and tendencies to action in many directions.

The finite being is limited, restricted, repressed on every side by the surrounding world, and its fundamental want is the preservation, development, and perfection of its own self; and therefore its life may be said to consist in a continuous effort towards self-preservation, self-development, self-perfection. But this, the fundamental need and spring of action of every living creature, includes many subordinate wants and springs of action within or under it, according to the agents' different relations and points of contact with the rest of the world; and therefore many different impulses and inclinations tending to action in different directions (so to speak), and towards different ends, and to development along different lines. Thus, in one person the prevailing impulses extend no further perhaps than to immediate gratification of the senses; in another, they extend to future and distant interests of self; in others they extend far enough to include the safety and happiness of others, and so on—leading to further developments of the self along the lines of egoism, altruism, or intellectual or moral excellence.

Now these differences in the prevailing directions of action and development help us to understand the possible explanations of character.

These tendencies are of two classes.

I. In the first place, every mind contains a more or less organized system of impulses and tendencies, or springs of action, tending towards the attainment of certain ends, and the overcoming

thereby of certain wants and imperfections. These include two classes—

(1) The impulses, inclinations, tendencies, and susceptibilities which we inherit from our parents and ancestors, and which are, therefore, innate and latent in the constitution of our nature from birth ; and

Inherited.

(2) Those other tendencies and inclinations which we acquire in our own life-time by example, training, and practice, and, becoming thus secondarily automatic, are described as habits.

Acquired.

Now these tendencies—registered in the conformation of brain, nerves and muscles—are excited and drawn forth by changing circumstances ; and, in straining towards the particular objects which excite them, manifest themselves as springs of action—operating either *automatically* (instinctively), or through desire and therefore *purposively*. Now character is sometimes understood as *the aggregate, or rather system of these inherited and acquired tendencies, dispositions, and inclinations* ; or more precisely, as *the general disposition* which results from the comparative strength, and the interactions and combinations, of these subordinate tendencies.

Character defined as the general disposition resulting from the interaction and comparative strength of these tendencies.

But if we accept this as an adequate definition of character, we shall be involved in what has been referred to above as the *heteronomy* of will, commonly called *necessitarianism* (§1).

For if the *character* of the self mean nothing more than the number and comparative strength of the springs of action, then we shall have to conceive the *self* as nothing more than the aggregate of sensations, ideas, feelings, desires, and instinctive impulses ; and we shall have to think

But this supposes a purely sensationist view of the self, reducing



it to a  
mechanism  
of desires  
and tenden-  
cies.

of volition as nothing more than the resultant of the combinations and interactions of the latent impulses and conscious desires, depending on nothing but their comparative strength. For there will always be a plurality of impulses and desires straining towards their own realization, and coming into conflict with each other, and holding each other in counterpoise for the time being. And as the result of this conflict of motive-forces, some one impulse, or set of allied impulses, will always prove itself the strongest, and will absorb, suppress, or exclude from the mental field for the time being all the rest, and overflow spontaneously into action for the attainment of its end, and thus constitute the volition of the moment.

Thus self will be the aggregate system of ideas, feelings and desires; volition will be the overflow of the strongest tendency of the moment; and as volition is the expression of character, character will depend on the *comparative strength* of the different classes of impulses in virtue of which one impulse or class of impulses—*e. g.*, egoistic or altruistic, intellectual or æsthetic—habitually prevails over others, and rises into volition.

But the true  
self is not a  
changing  
equilibrium  
of feelings  
and desires.

II. § 32. But it may be objected that mind cannot be thus reduced to an automatically working mechanism of sensations, ideas, feelings, desires and instinctive tendencies. To define the self as only the sum of these, is to leave the real self out of account altogether. These are merely the more or less organized vital and mental materials in and through which the true self manifests and realizes itself.

Life in its lowest stages, indeed, may fairly be described as a system of impulses tending vaguely and automatically towards preservation and development. But when it rises into being *rational mind*, it becomes conscious of *itself* as

something which *has* these tendencies and is therefore *above* them, and of the ends towards which these tendencies lead, and of what is better and worse, higher and lower in these ends; and is able to judge in what its own highest development and perfection, and therefore its own highest good consists; and by so doing is able to reduce its desires and tendencies to due order and subordination, and to adapt them to an orderly system or hierarchy of means and ends, convergent to an ultimate highest end and good.

Thus, instead of consisting of, or being determined by tendencies and desires, the real self rather *determines what its tendencies and desires shall be*; and, instead of being a passive mechanism, determines from beforehand what its future development and destiny shall be. It is enabled to do so by possessing reason, which is the power of discerning what is really and essentially good, and thereby what its fundamental and essential wants really are, and what the means are of overcoming them and realizing the highest possibilities of its nature.

This, then, is what has been described above (§ 1) as the intellectualist view of mind—recognising the possibility of action's being determined through thought and idea; and leads to the *autonomy* or freedom of *will*, and to a different view of character from the former. But to arrive at this conception of character we have to distinguish between what may be called—

(i) The *nature* or *temperament* of a person, which is the aggregate of the above innate and acquired inclinations, which we think of (figuratively at least) as tending to operate automatically

But an active principle which determines its own desires and tendencies.

Therefore we must not identify character with temperament as the above explanation does.

—*i. e.*, to go forth spontaneously towards their objects by exciting ideas and desires of them, which, if left to themselves, would overflow into action spontaneously ; and—

(*ii*) The regulative rational *will-power of self*, by which the self rises above these spontaneous inclinations ; identifies itself with, and concentrates its whole energy upon those wants and ends which reason approves of as highest and best ; and thereby determines what its own predominant motives and desires shall be ; and determines through them the direction of its actions, and thereby of its own future development.

But regard character as an attribute of the essential self—manifested in making and controlling tendencies and desires.

Character, therefore, will have to be distinguished from temperament, and will be *that fundamental quality of the self which is manifested in the general form of its volitions, i. e.*, in the ways in which it determines the direction of its inclinations and desires, and thereby of its actions. One person will determine them in one way, and another person in another way ; and this difference will be difference of character. Character therefore, in the last analysis, instead of being a general term for the inclinations and desires, will be that in a person which determines what the inclinations and desires shall be.

Hence it has been defined as “the habitual mode in which will regulates the system of desires and impulses” ; “the predominant habitude of will” (Kant) ; “a completely fashioned will” (Mill)—the other mental functions being regarded as auxiliary to and included under will.

Will is often defined as the choosing between different desires or springs of action. The springs

conflict with each other, it is said, and hold each other in equilibrium until will comes in to judge between them, and *choose* which shall be realized. This may be accepted as a convenient figurative statement ; but if literally true, it would imply a breach in the unity of mind, *viz.*, between desire and will. The truth rather is that rational will makes, or at least transforms, the inclinations and desires ; and determines action, not in spite of contrary desires, but by making or transforming desire itself. It does not so much *choose* as *make* its inclinations and motives.

### PART III.

#### ETHICAL JUDGMENT.

**XI. The Moral Judgment Proper.** § 33. The object of ethical science in the wider sense is to determine what is good and bad in conduct, including what is good and bad in the moral sense of being right or wrong. We shall speak here of ethical judgment in this narrower sense of moral judgment.

Moral judgment, a branch of ethical.

Now judgment in general is the intellectual process by which we discern and pronounce a particular object to possess a particular attribute or predicate already present to the mind in the form of idea. Moral judgment, therefore, will be the mental act of discerning and pronouncing a particular action to have the quality or predicate of rightness and obligatoriness or its opposite, of which a general idea or standard is already before the mind.

Judgment in general

Now it is evident that every judgment will involve these constituents :—

(a) A *subject*, or mind endowed with certain

Supposes a subject who judges.

powers of comparing, discerning, and judging objects according to standards.

An object  
which is  
judged.

(b) An *object*, which the subject discerns to possess or want such and such an attribute, to agree or not agree with such and such a standard.

A standard  
according to  
which it is  
judged.

(c) An *idea* or *concept* already present in the mind, of the attribute which the mind judges the object to possess or want—the standard with which it judges it to agree or disagree. This is already present in the mind as idea, because, though the object of the judgment may be new to us, the predicate which we ascribe to it is already familiar (indeed judgment is so far an act of recognition, that in it we recognise as present in the object, an attribute already familiar to us as having been perceived in other things and retained in idea).

And a  
faculty of  
judging.

(d) And a power or *faculty* of mind by which it discerns the particular kind of quality, and forms a general idea or standard of it, and discerns its presence or absence in every new object brought before the mind.

Thus, when we pronounce the judgment "this rose is red," we have before us the object rose; and we have in our minds beforehand an idea of the quality redness, so as to be able to use it as a standard by which to judge the rose; and therefore also a power of sensibility and cognition by which we have been conscious of the quality redness, and retained it in our minds in the form of idea, and now recognise its presence in things whenever we meet with it again. And the judgment consists in discerning that this quality, which we have in our mind as idea, is present in the rose in actuality, so that this particular rose agrees with other roses possessing this quality.

Thus when we say, "This season is better than usual," "That man has acted generously," "That is a very fine building," "Your servant is untrust-

worthy," we have general ideas of temperature, generosity, symmetry of parts, and trustworthiness; and the judgment consists in discerning and affirming that this person or thing shares in this particular attribute, and is to be thought along with the other persons or things in which it is present.

So, in the case of moral judgment, there will be (besides the self which judges) (1) an object which we judge to possess or want a particular quality, and which in the case of moral judgment will be voluntary action; (2) a standard by which we judge it, *viz.*, a general idea of the quality which it is judged to have or want, which in this case will be moral quality; and (3) a faculty by which we perceive that quality in particular actions, form the general idea of it, and recognise henceforth its presence or absence. And the judgment consists in recognising in the new object the same quality of rightness which we have in our mental standard or ideal of conduct.

These terms  
all supposed  
in moral  
judgment.

§ 34. In having an *object, standard, and faculty* moral judgment agrees with other judgments. It differs, however, in the following respects:—

But there  
are points in  
which moral  
judgment  
differs from  
others.

(a) That it is a *regulative judgment*, and involves therefore the idea of oughtness, obligation or duty; *i. e.*, in judging the action to be right in relation to ourselves, we at the same time judge that it is obligatory upon us to do it, that it is our duty to do it, that we ought to do it. In other words, in judging it to have the quality of rightness we judge it also to have the quality of oughtness or obligatoriness—whether this quality of oughtness may be regarded as merely another aspect of the

It is practical  
and regulative—judging what  
actions  
should be.

quality of rightness, so that the same judgment is sufficient to affirm both ; or as an additional quality requiring an additional judgment.

And judging them as means to an ultimate good.

(b) That the ideas of rightness and obligation combined suggest, again, the idea of an ultimate end or highest good, to which all actions must be conducive in order to be right and obligatory ; and which is therefore the ultimate standard to which all other standards must be made subordinate as means to ends.

And making the subject feel responsible.

(c) And finally, that these ideas carry with them the conviction of responsibility, and therefore of punishment and reward—in other words, of the sanctions of conduct, or its ultimate consequences to the happiness and pain of the agent.

Hence all the contents of moral consciousness are dependent on the judgment.

It appears, therefore, that all the fundamental questions of ethics—the *object*, the *quality* and *standard*, the *faculty* which judges, the accompanying convictions of *duty* and *responsibility*, the highest *good*, and the *sanctions* of conduct, are all involved in, or rise out of the fundamental question of the *moral judgment* of actions as right or wrong. Hence the moral judgment is the fundamental question of ethics. But the principal question with regard to the judgment is that of the *quality* which actions are judged to possess, or, in other words, the *standard* according to which we judge them.

But before proceeding to the question of the quality which is called rightness, and the general idea which we form of it and use as standard, we must consider the *object* in which that quality inheres.

**XII. The  
Object of  
Moral  
Judgment.**

§ 35. Now, as regards the *object* of the judgment, we know already that it is voluntary action, or action for the realization of a foreseen and desired end. But this general statement requires further definition. Thus—

(A) The question may be asked : *whose actions is it that we first judge?* our own, or those of others? Some moralists have assumed that in the first instance we judge the actions of others, and, having formed our standard of rightness and wrongness from what we have seen in the conduct of others, turn round, so to speak, and apply the same standard to ourselves. We judge the actions of others, Adam Smith says, from the stand-point of an "impartial spectator," and in the case of our own actions, we put ourselves in the position of such a spectator, and conceive how he would judge them. Thus we judge our own actions by thinking how others would judge them.

"We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial spectator would examine it. Placing ourselves in his situation, we enter into the approbation or disapprobation of this supposed equitable judge" (Adam Smith).

The difficulty of this account consists in this, that we cannot judge an action without taking into consideration the *desire, motive, intention,* out of which the action springs; and these are subjective facts of which we can be directly conscious only in the case of our own actions. Hence it is obvious that direct moral judgment is possible only in the case of our own actions—that it must be an act of our own self-consciousness. It follows that in

The question of the object involves these subordinate questions.

Whose actions are the direct objects of the judgment?

Not the actions of others, as some have thought,

But our own actions.



judging the actions of others, we must conceive them as our own, and think how we should judge ourselves under the same circumstances. ♣

But on which of the factors of action does its moral quality depend?

On its mental antecedents? or its external results?

§ 36. (B) But a voluntary action, we have found, passes through a series of phases from the first impulse to it within the mind to its final completion in outward results. Hence the question must be considered : on which of these phases does the moral character\* of an action depend? which of them is the real seat, so to speak, of moral quality?

The answer given to this question affects very closely the question of the nature of moral judgment itself. Now the principal phases through which every action passes are, we have found, the mental states and processes out of which it springs, the movements in which it embodies itself, and the results which it produces. We may leave the physical movements out of account. These may be performed skilfully or unskilfully, as, *e. g.*, the movements of a surgeon in an operation, or of an artist in painting a picture, but we do not ascribe moral quality to them. We must judge the moral quality of an action, therefore, either by its mental antecedents, or its external results.

Do we judge action according to its actual results?

(a) Do we judge an action morally good or bad, then, by *the outward results* which it produces? We might do so safely if we were sure that the results correspond exactly with the agent's desire and intention. But so many circumstances interfere with the carrying out of our intentions that actual results are often different from, and sometimes entirely contrary to, what was intended; as when a sportsman shooting at a tiger wounds

his friend, or the physician striving to cure a patient by some mistake causes his death. We cannot, therefore, judge the moral worth of actions by their actual results.

(b) Do we judge actions then by their subjective *spring*, *motive*, or *end* for the sake of which alone the action is performed, as some have said? This would be still more dangerous, because judging by the desired end alone would lead us to overlook the *means* used for its attainment—the intermediate ends sought as means towards the principal end. This would be equivalent to accepting the dangerous principle that *the end justifies the means*—a principle which would often justify fraud, violence, and the most wicked actions; for in the case even of the worst crimes it may generally be pleaded that the end desired, considered apart from the means employed, was innocent, or even positively good. Robbery and murder have often been committed for the good end of relieving distress.

Do we judge it according to its spring, motive, or end?

This would lead us to assume that a good motive may justify evil means.

And yet it must be admitted that there are cases in which the end does appear to justify the means. In the case of children, the prevention of evil habits justifies the infliction of pain. In society, the prevention of crime justifies imprisonments and executions. In the case of nations, the defence of rights and liberties is held to justify war with all its evils. But in such cases it can be pleaded either that the means used, though evil in themselves, are for the greater good of those that suffer by them, or that they are submitted to voluntarily for the good of others (as in cases of self-sacrifice).

But cases of this, only apparent.

And it is generally admitted that the goodness of an end may, in many cases, be pleaded as an extenuating circumstance. A story is told of the saintly shoemaker, Crispin, that he felt such an

overpowering compassion for his poor fellow villagers walking bare-footed in the snow, that he stole leather to make them shoes. Yet, it may be said, he has never been rated a thief and rascal.

And the principle would be dangerous.

But there is danger in excusing wrong actions on account of their spring or end, in private life at least; and it consists in this, that the doing of wrong actions, though at first for good ends, soon becomes a habit of doing them independently of the original ends; and habit soon becomes a "second nature," and thus a criminal disposition may be acquired. "Criminal means once tolerated are soon preferred, as presenting a shorter cut to the object than through the highway of moral virtues" (Burke).

Action must be judged by intention.

(c) It follows, therefore, that an action, to be judged rightly according to the moral standard, must be judged not by its motive alone, but by its whole intention or volition. In other words, it must be judged not by the one end for the sake of which alone the action is performed, but by this principal end in conjunction with the subordinate ends which are sought only as means towards this principal end. Thus, in judging our own actions, we judge them in every case by what we know to be, or to have been, our whole intention. In judging those of others, we judge them by what we infer to have been *their* intentions. And to say that we judge actions by intentions is equivalent to saying that we judge them by their *foreseen, willed, and intended* results, not by such as may not have been foreseen nor willed (nor even by their actual results, which may contain a great deal not foreseen nor intended).

Intention or complex volition, the

Thus, we have found that in willing a particular end, we must will also whatever we see to be the necessary means, or to be inseparable accom-

paniments and consequences of that end; and must seek the means as preliminary and auxiliary ends, before we can think of attaining the end desired. Thus most volitions are complex—the principal one containing several subordinate ones within it—and most actions are really series, in which several auxiliary actions serve as necessary steps in the realization of the principal end. Therefore, in the moral judgment of action, the whole complex volition has to be taken into consideration as the seat of moral quality.

real seat of  
moral  
quality.

For the principal end may in itself be harmless or positively good, while the subordinate and auxiliary ones may by themselves be criminal. Thus Macbeth desired to be a king, and in the ambition by itself there was nothing criminal. But he could attain the desired end only by the murder of his sovereign and benefactor. He was naturally averse to ingratitude and crime; but he allowed his ruling passion to overcome his aversion, and murdered his benefactor for the sake of his crown. It is obvious, therefore, that we must judge his action not by his motive alone (or that which he really desired, and for the sake of which he performed the action), but by his whole intention or complex volition, including means as well as principal end.

And it can be understood how this involution of volitions within volitions, this subordination of actions under actions, makes moral judgment to be often difficult, and leads sometimes to differences of judgment. So much for the object of moral judgment.

### XIII. The Standards of Ethical and Moral Judgment.

§ 37. Actions may be judged good or bad in many different senses; and ethics aims at reducing these different kinds of goodness and badness to their highest\* classes, and forming clear concepts

Ethics aims at determining the highest standards by which actions may be judged.

Moral science aims at determining the moral standard proper

or general ideas of them ; and in so doing seeks to determine their relations of lower and higher, and arrive at the idea of *a highest good* to which all the others will be subordinate as means to end, and which will give order and unity to life. These different kinds of goodness will include *moral* goodness, the definition and explanation of which is the object of moral science in its narrower sense as a branch of ethics.

But the moral standard cannot be studied apart from the other ethical standards.

Our main object here is to attain an understanding of the moral standard proper, that is, to determine in what the essential *rightness and wrongness* of actions consists. But in doing this, it is necessary to consider the other ethical standards at the same time, so as to make the different standards illustrate each other by contrast. It is expedient to do so also for this reason, that every one of the ethical standards of goodness has been identified by some with moral goodness proper ; and ethical literature has been pervaded by controversies as to which of them is the real and ultimate moral standard.

We consider first, therefore, the meaning of standards of judgment in general, and then proceed to consider the principal ethical standards, with a view especially to obtain light upon *the moral standard proper*.

Meaning of standards in connection with judgment.

§ 38. When we judge an action to be good or bad we must already have in our mind a general idea of what goodness of conduct is, and judge the action to be good or bad according as it agrees or disagrees with our idea—possesses or wants the attribute which is present to our mind in that idea. Now this general idea by which we judge things may be called the standard of our judgment ;

and a general idea of some kind of goodness and badness by which we judge particular actions may be called an ethical standard.

Thus all judgments of quality imply a mental standard of quality, which we apply to the thing judged, so as to discern its agreement or disagreement. When we say "this apple is sweet," we are pronouncing a judgment on an object; and the judgment implies a standard by which we judge it—in this case, a standard of taste. When we say, "the crops look flourishing," the season is unusually rainy," "that was an imprudent action," we have before our minds standards of vegetable growth, of the weather, of prudence of conduct, and judge the objects according to them. Similarly, when we judge an action to be ethically good or bad, we judge it to possess a certain quality or predicate, which we call ethical goodness or badness; and therefore supply from within our own mind a standard or general idea of this quality, and judge it according to our standard.

Hence the question: what is the standard of ethical judgment? is really equivalent to the question: in what does the goodness and badness of actions consist? now it is obvious that actions may be judged good or bad in different senses, and therefore according to different standards. Thus they may be judged according to the standard of skill and dexterity, and pronounced skilful or the opposite. They may be judged slow or rapid, wise or unwise, awkward or graceful; each judgment supposing a standard or general idea by which the action is judged. But such standards of goodness may be generalized into four principal kinds, and these four most general kinds of goodness may be called the ethical standards,—i.e., the highest and most general and comprehensive standards of what is good in volutary action.

Standards  
of ethical  
judgment  
reducible to  
four.

Law, Plea-  
sure, Perfe-  
ction, Formal  
Rightness.

Thus actions may be judged good in the sense of being <sup>(1)</sup>*conformable to law*; in the sense of being <sup>(2)</sup>*conducive to pleasure*; <sup>(3)</sup>in the sense of being consistent with and conducive to *the highest development and perfection of the self*; and in the sense of being <sup>(4)</sup>*formally and essentially right in themselves*.

Hence we may call these four kinds of goodness the standards of ethical judgment, as being the *highest\* and most general and comprehensive conceptions of what is good in voluntary action*. And of these we shall find that the last is the standard of *moral* judgment proper, though we shall find also that this last kind of goodness is ultimately contained within the preceding kind, *viz.*, conduciveness to the highest development and perfection of rational mind. Hence—

Law as stand-  
ard of moral  
judgment.

§ 39. (A) The standard by which we estimate the goodness and badness of conduct may be conceived to be a law or system of laws imposed upon the individual from without by the absolute will of some higher power, and which the individual has only to know, remember and obey. The law is communicated to him by speech or writing; he fixes and retains it in his mind as idea, and uses this idea of law as a standard with which to compare every possible action, so as to perceive its agreement or non-agreement with the law, and judge it to be good or bad accordingly.

And some, we shall find, have gone so far as to say that there is nothing naturally and essentially right or wrong in actions; that whatever is right or wrong must be made to be so by the will and command of some higher power; and that law,

therefore, is not only a standard of conduct, but is the moral standard proper.

The law, again, may be conceived as being the command of God (divine law), or the command of the state (political law), or the unwritten manners and customs of society (social law). These, therefore, may be distinguished as the legal standards of conduct. And the fact that the word *right* originally meant *straight*, may indicate that it referred originally to conformity with canon, rule, or law.

(B) But it may be thought that we cannot understand the meaning and qualities of actions, and what is good and bad in them, by considering the actions singly by themselves. Actions with their proximate results are only means to ends, and these again to other ends. And, in a well-regulated life, all actions will be adapted and subordinated to some one ultimate end to which all particular actions with their individual ends and results are only means. And as every action has for its immediate end and motive, something which appears to be a *good* (supplying some want or imperfection), therefore the ultimate end of all ends will be the *Highest Good*.

The highest good as standard of moral judgment.

Hence, as all actions have, or should have, reference to some ultimate good, it is clear that the worth of actions must consist ultimately in their being consistent with, or tending to promote this ultimate good; and cannot be judged without our having some idea of this good before the mind, as the standard by which to judge. Hence the ultimate standard of conduct will be the idea of the highest good, or end of all ends, to which all actions are, or should be conducive. And ethical judgment will consist in comparing particular actions (*i.e.*, intended results, or immediate and proximate ends)

Because goodness of action must depend on goodness of end.



with this highest good, and judging whether they are consistent with, or conducive to this highest end of all action.

Hence teleological standards.

Judgment of this kind may be called *teleological*, because it makes the standard to be the idea of a highest end or good. The teleological method of judging, however, may be understood so as to include two very different standards:—

(a)  
Pleasure as the highest good, and therefore as standard of moral judgment.

(a) We may think that *good*, and perhaps that the *highest good*, consists in some permanent state of *feeling*; and that the feeling in which it consists is *pleasure*. The goodness of conduct, therefore, will consist in its conduciveness to pleasure; and one standard of ethical judgment will be the general idea which we have formed from experience of what forms of conduct are, with all their conditions, accompaniments and results near and remote, most conducive on the whole to pleasure; and the judgment will consist in comparing particular actions with this general idea.

Hence ethics of Hedonism.

This, then, will be the *hedonistic* or *utilitarian* standard and judgment—estimating actions by their conduciveness to pleasure (*hedoné*), or their *utility*. It is unquestionably a standard to all, as all value pleasure; but some have gone so far as to maintain that it is the *one ultimate standard*, and that the moral rightness itself of actions consists in their conduciveness to pleasure, so that it is not only *an* ethical standard, but is *the* moral standard itself.

(b)  
Essential perfection of self as highest good and standard.

(b) On the other hand we may think that, as feeling is only a function of mind and dependent on the mental constitution, the *ultimate good* must consist of something in the nature of mind itself—that, to mental beings, the highest of all goods must be *perfect mind*. "What shall it profit a man

if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

From this point of view, the standard will be the idea of perfect mind. And as the essence of mind is rational will (to which all the other faculties are auxiliary), it will follow that the ultimate standard may also be expressed as the idea of *perfect will*. And the rule of life may be said to be *self-realization*, or the working out, by one's own will and effort, of whatever potentialities of higher excellence may be latent in the self.

Hence  
ethics of self-  
realization.

This, then, may be called the *idealist* or *perfectionist* standard, because it holds up an ideal of mental perfection to be realized by the self's own effort.

(C) But to know thus the remote and ultimate results of actions—their ultimate conduciveness whether to happiness or to the perfection of mind—supposes obviously a complicate process of thought and inference, such as is not possible to any mind in the heat of action, and to many minds not possible at all (an inference, in fact, belonging more to philosophy than to practical life). The ethical judgment of actions supposes, therefore, a kind of goodness and badness inherent in the form or nature of the actions, and which can be perceived directly by merely considering the action in connection with its immediate circumstances without stopping to recollect whether it has been commanded or forbidden by any higher power (as the legal judgment supposes); or to perform any abstract process of inference to ultimate results (as the hedonist and idealist standards suppose).

Harmony of  
self and cir-  
cumstances  
as standard  
of moral  
judgment.

In other words, there must be *something in the*

Hence ethics  
of intuition.

*form of the action which makes it to be good or bad, apart from its being commanded or forbidden, and which can be discerned intuitively without inference to remote consequences.*

And the *form* of an action (that in an action which differentiates it from other actions) will consist in the change of circumstances or relations which it is intended to bring about directly to the persons concerned, *i.e.*, to the agent of the action, and the persons affected by it.

For every action makes some change in the relations in which the agent stands to other persons, and perhaps in those of other persons to each other. And these changed relations involve something which may be called fitness or unfitness, congruity or incongruity, proportion or disproportion; as the different parts of a building are discerned to be in proportion or disproportion to each other, and the building is thereby judged to be beautiful or otherwise.

Explaining  
best the nor-  
mal moral  
judgment.

Now this fitness or unfitness of relation, this congruity or incongruity of circumstances which every action sets up, constitutes at least one kind of ethical goodness and badness. And it is one that is inherent in the very form and essence of the action, and can be discerned *intuitively and immediately*. And it is this inherent and formal goodness or badness that has the best claim to be considered the *moral quality*, properly so called, of action, and to be the predicate of the *moral judgment* proper—that essential *rightness* or *wrongness* the definition of which we have stated to be the principal object of moral science in the narrower sense.

By intuitively perceiving this quality of rightness or wrongness as inherent in particular actions, we may form at last a general concept of it, and use this concept of rightness as a standard by which to judge future actions ; or, as some think, we may form this general idea of rightness by an *a priori* power or necessity of thought, without requiring any generalization from the perceived qualities of particular actions.

Its standard may be a *priori* or a *posteriori*.

This, then, may be called the *formal* standard, because it makes rightness to consist of something in the form of the action—in the new set of relations which it establishes ; or the *intuitionist*, because the congruity or incongruity of the relations is discerned by an act of immediate intuition (as distinguished from inference). It has also been called *independent* morality because it makes rightness to consist in the nature of the action itself, independently of any superior will, and to be discerned independently of any inference to ultimate results.

These four then—conformity to law, conduciveness to pleasure and to personal perfection, and harmony of circumstances—are all standards of ethical judgment, because each is good in its own place and degree, and each may be used as a standard by which actions may be judged good or bad. The great question therefore is : Which of them is the highest and ultimate standard—the moral standard proper—to which the others are only as means to end ? Indeed each of these qualities of conduct—legality, utility, tendency to self-realization, and harmony of relation—has been raised to the rank of ultimate standard by certain thinkers, and ethical literature is full of controversy as to their relations, leading to the so-called *Legalist*, *Hedonist*, *Perfectionist* and *Intuitionist* schools of ethical thought.

Hence four principal ethical standards.

The question of moral science— which of them is the moral standard proper ?

These standards, therefore, require to be considered in greater detail ; and as our object here is

mainly to define and understand the moral standard proper which determines the essential rightness and wrongness of action, our consideration of the different ethical standards will take the form mainly of analysis and criticism. In a work on ethics in the wider sense of the word there would be no such limitation, because the above concepts are all legitimate ethical standards. We consider first the view which accepts law as standard.

#### XIV. Law as Standard.

A. That the standard is the will of a superior power, and moral rightness is obedience thereto.

§ 40. The standard may be conceived to be a law or code of laws imposed on minds from without, by the will and command of a superior power. In other words, there may be supposed to be a superior power which wills that men should act in certain ways and not in others, and expresses its will in commands or laws. And the will of that power may be supposed to be absolute, so that what it wills is good, and what it forbids is bad. And some have gone so far as to say that *moral* right and wrong have no other meaning than what is commanded or forbidden by this supreme power. No room is then left for the question, why these forms of action are prescribed by that power. The fact is that they are prescribed, and this is sufficient to make them *right*.

These commands, then—communicated to individuals by speech or writing, and enforced by threats of punishment, and in some cases by prospects of reward—form the standard according to which men judge the rightness and wrongness of their actions; and moral judgment is simply the act of discerning whether any particular action is or is not in conformity with the prescribed law.

It is thus assumed that there is nothing naturally

and essentially right or wrong in itself. Whatever is right or wrong must be made to be so by the will and command of some power higher than ourselves. "In a state of nature (where no common ruling power is as yet recognised) nothing can be unjust; notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place;" and "no law can be unjust" (Hobbes).

Nothing naturally right or obligatory, but only by command.

Hobbes

"Moral obligation is like all other obligations; and all obligation is nothing more than an inducement of sufficient strength resulting in some way from the command of another" (Paley).

But the legal theory is obviously a primitive form of thought which can prevail only in times before genuine ethical inquiry has begun. It is open to the following obvious objections:—

General objections to the legal system as a theory of morality.

(1) By making morality to depend on external commands enforced by punishments, it takes away its character of being moral. Moral conduct consists in doing what is right from the conviction that it is right. Action done under the compulsion of threatened punishment, or for the sake of promised reward, cannot have any positive moral merit. The moral standard must be something which commends itself to the reason and the heart; which can be understood and felt; and which the self can therefore identify itself with, freely and intelligently.

(1) It substitutes self-interest for morality.

Indeed, commands imposed from outside and enforced by punishments, without the understanding or approval of the person, do not differ essentially from physical laws. These also have to be conformed to for fear of the consequences which follow from their violation.

(2) And further, laws themselves are only means to ends, so that their goodness can consist in nothing but their conduciveness to some end

(2) Law itself supposes a higher standard.

and good, and must therefore be subject to a standard higher than themselves.

Different forms of the legal system.

§ 41. The legal theory has assumed different forms, however, according to what has been conceived to be the supreme power whose will is law. It may be conceived as being the will of God, or the will of the ruler, or the collective will of society. Hence:—

(a) That the absolute will of God is the ultimate standard of right and wrong.

Moral and even mathematical truth depends on the will of God.

(a) The *theological* standard.—It may be assumed that it is the will of God that makes actions to be right or wrong, and that they are right or wrong simply because God has commanded or forbidden them, and enforces his will by threatening punishments, and promising rewards. It is irrelevant, it may be said, to ask why he wills this, and forbids that; it is sufficient to know that he does so. It is not necessary to say that he wills them because they are right; on the contrary they are right because he wills them. He might have willed otherwise, and in that case right and wrong would have been otherwise than as they are. "God has given a rule," says Locke, "whereby men should govern themselves. He has a right to do so, as we are his creatures; and he has power to enforce it by rewards and punishments of infinite weight and duration in another life. This is the only true touchstone of moral rectitude; and by comparing them to this law it is that men judge of the moral good or evil of actions." He would probably say that holding actions to be right in themselves, independently of the will of God, is making a metaphysical assumption which we have no right to make.

"No act is evil except in so far as it is forbidden by God, and none which may not be made good if it be commanded by God, and conversely" (William of Ockham). "Private happiness is our motive and the will of God is our rule" (Paley). "To him that considers the immensity of God it is manifest that there can be nothing which does not depend on him, not only no existent thing, but no order, no law, no ground of truth or goodness" (Descartes). Even mathematical truths, such as that the three angles of the triangle are equal to two right angles, must depend on the will of God, because there can be no law or necessity above or apart from his will.

Hence the ultimate standard of moral judgment is the will of God communicated to man "either by the light of nature, or the voice of revelation."

This view, however, which makes right and wrong to be created by an act of divine will, is open to many objections.—(1) It makes the will of God to be arbitrary. God himself must have a reason for what he commands and forbids; and the reason must be that what he commands is good, and what he forbids is wrong. It cannot be right simply because he wills it; he wills it because it is right. Hence the ultimate nature of rightness must be independent of the will of God.

(2) By making God to be above moral law, and moral law to be a creation of God, it seems to deprive God himself of all moral character. But the truth is that we conceive righteousness, not as an arbitrary creation of God's will, but as an element of God's own self-existent nature, out of which his will springs. Hence moral goodness is not so much obedience to God's will, as conformity to God's nature which makes his will. His will, therefore, is not arbitrary, but expresses his essen-

But this view of the standard is open to objections.

It makes God's will to be above moral law.

(1) And thereby deprives God of moral character.



tial nature which is above his will. "The being of God is a law to his working; for that perfection which God is, giveth perfection to what he doeth."

(b) That the will of the state is the standard of right and wrong.

§ 42. (b) The *political* standard.—It may be held that the will which makes moral law, is simply the will of the supreme human ruler, or ruling body—king or council—in other words, the will of the state. It is the function of the legislator, it may be said, to consider and determine what shall be considered right and wrong in the commonwealth, to publish his determinations in the form of laws, and enforce them by penalties. The real moral standard, therefore, is the code of laws which has been formulated and imposed by the state upon its subjects, and made obligatory by penalties. "The civil law alone is the supreme court of appeal in all cases of right and wrong." "There are no authentic doctrines concerning just and unjust, good and evil, except the laws which are established in every city, and it concerns none to inquire what shall be reputed just or unjust, good or evil, except those only whom the community have appointed to be the interpreters of their laws" (Hobbes).

But there are objections to this view also.

This view, however, can hardly be upheld by itself, (1) because political laws are of narrow range, and cover only a small part of life—it would be impossible to formulate laws for all possible circumstances. And (2) because the state must have a reason always for the laws which it imposes, and this reason will be itself the ultimate standard. If it say that its reason for its laws is that they are necessary for the safety and happiness of its

subjects, then the real standard will be the utilitarian or hedonist one; and in fact the political theory has usually been combined with the utilitarian. And (3) the legislator, generally speaking, only voices or expresses the sentiment and will of the community for which he legislates, so that the political comes to be included under—

§ 43. (c) The *social* standard.—It may be admitted that political law does not cover the whole of life; but there is another kind of law, it may be said, which both underlies the former, and supplies what it wants. Thus it may be said that the power which makes both political and moral law is the *collective will* and *consent* of society. The will of society expresses itself in two ways, (1) through the state and legislature and their definitely formulated (political) laws; and (2) through the great mass of manners and customs which have grown up and obtained recognition in the course of ages, without having ever been reduced to written law. Social law, therefore, includes political, but is of much wider application, covering the whole sphere of life, private and public. And its rules (the manners and customs of society) are enforced by public sentiment of approval and disapproval, honour and dishonour.

(c) That the will of society collective is the standard of right and wrong.

Hence, it may be said, the manners and customs of society are the real standard of morality. What is in conformity with them is right; what is contrary to them is wrong. Society demands that every one entering into it, and sharing in its advantages, shall conform to its manners and customs, and communicates them if they do not; and such confor-

Society is based on contract, and morality is conformity with the terms of the contract.

mity is morality. Society and morality are thus based on an implicit contract or covenant, which every member is tacitly pledged to observe. Before this "social contract" was entered into, and society thereby constituted (*i.e.*, in the original state of nature), there was no such thing as right or wrong. Nothing is right or wrong in itself, but only by social rule and covenant.

Objections  
to this view.

That this view has been widespread is shown by the fact that the very terms *morals* and *ethics* mean what pertains to the manners and customs of society. But, like the other legal theories, it is superficial, and fails to go to the root of the matter. (1) The manners and customs of society must themselves be grounded on reasons, and these reasons must be the real standard. (2) The accepted manners and customs of one period are at another period condemned as wrong; which proves them to have been founded on error, and shows that mere manners and customs cannot supply any uniform and consistent standard. And (3) such contradictions in the accepted standards prompt the mind to search for a true and ultimate standard, with a view to correcting the manners and customs of society; and in this way ethical and moral study originates. Custom, it is felt, cannot make rightness, but rightness should make custom.

Founded on  
philosophi-  
cal relativism  
carried  
to an ex-  
treme.

The above view, however, was held by the ancient Sophists and Epicureans. "Man is the measure of all things," the Sophists said, and therefore right and wrong are matters of human convention. There is no such thing as justice in itself, Epicurus said. There can be justice and injustice only in those communities where men have entered into mutual compacts not to hurt one another.

Hence Socrates devoted himself to the task of proving against the Sophists that there is reality and truth independent of human sensations ; and that right and wrong are independent of human convention, and grounded in the eternal nature of things.

More recently the same view has been taught by Hobbes in conjunction with the hedonistic standard.

Nevertheless laws *are* standards of conduct, if not the ultimate standard ; and conformity to them is in the majority of cases good and right. The question, when resistance to political and social laws may be morally justifiable, is a subject for more extended ethical treatises.

**XV.  
Pleasure  
as Stand-  
ard.**

§ 44. All rational actions are directed towards the realization of desired ends, represented in ideas.

These desired ends appear to the agent to be good in some sense and degree, otherwise he would not desire them. The goodness of actions may therefore be estimated according to the ends to which they are directed. And the ends or goods aimed at in actions may be reduced, we have found (§ 39), to two comprehensive heads, *viz.*, pleasure and personal perfection. Therefore the ideas of future pleasure and perfection may be used as standards by which to judge the goodness of actions. We shall speak first of conduciveness to pleasure as a standard of conduct, and of the contention of the Hedonist or Utilitarian school of ethics that it is not merely *a* standard, but is *the* ultimate standard, and therefore the true measure of the rightness and wrongness of actions—the moral standard proper. Moral science has to consider the grounds of this claim, and to show what the relation of

The goodness of actions must be judged according to their tendency to promote the highest end of action.

But the highest end is the highest good of men.

happiness to the ultimate standard of right and wrong really is.

Now the highest good of men must be a felt good.

And the highest felt good is pleasure.

Therefore the tendency to promote pleasure is the ultimate standard of judgment.

Hedonists, then, reason in this way: There can be no ultimate good which is not a mental good; and no mental good which is not a state of consciousness; and no state of consciousness can be called good in itself unless it be pleasurable. The highest good, therefore, is pleasurable consciousness of the greatest possible intensity and the longest possible duration; and other things are good only in proportion as they are conducive as means towards this ultimate good as end, *i. e.*, in proportion as they contribute to the duration and pleasurable nature of conscious existence. Feeling is therefore the highest function of mind. Reason and will are good only as means for procuring and maintaining feeling; but feeling itself is good only in so far as it is pleasurable. "Pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends." *Therefore pleasure is the ultimate end and good.*

Action, therefore, is right in proportion as it tends to increase the sum total of pleasurable existence, and wrong in proportion as it tends to detract from the sum total, *i. e.*, to lessen the duration and intensity of pleasurable consciousness. "Actions are to be estimated by their tendency to promote happiness. Whatever is expedient is right. It is the utility of any moral rule which constitutes the obligation to obey it. But it must be what is expedient upon the whole, at the long run, in all its effects, collateral and remote, as well as immediate and direct; and it is evident that in computing consequences it makes no difference in what way, or at what distance, they ensue" (Paley).

It is not meant, indeed, that an action is right, because it is pleasurable. Right action may be, and indeed generally is, more or less painful. What makes it right is that it contributes, as a means, to the sum total of pleasure; which may be, and generally is, at the cost of present though temporary labour and pain.

The rightness of an action, therefore, is not its pleasantness, but its quality of being conducive as a means towards an end, viz., the greatest amount of pleasure on the whole. Rightness is the means; pleasure is the end and good. Rightness of conduct and virtue of character are not ends in themselves, nor desirable for their own sake, but simply, means towards an end. We must guard, therefore, against the ambiguity of the word good—goodness as *means*, and goodness as *end*. Virtue is good only as a means; pleasure is good in itself and as an end.

Rightness is not pleasurable, but the tendency to promote future pleasure.

This has been called the principle of *hedonism* because it makes pleasure (hedoné) to be the highest good; also the principle of *utility*, because it makes actions to be judged according to their usefulness as means for the promotion of pleasure and prevention of pain. "The utility or greatest happiness principle holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness pain and the privation of pleasure" (J. S. Mill). ✕

Hence Hedonism and Utilitarianism.

J. S. Mill.

"By utility is meant that property in an object whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, or prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness. By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish happiness." "Nature

Bentham.

has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*." "The principle of utility recognises this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and law." "And an action is conformable to the principle of utility (and therefore right) when the tendency it has to augment happiness is greater than its tendency to diminish it" (Bentham).

James Mill. "The whole business of the moral sentiments, moral approbation and disapprobation, has this for its object, the distribution of the good and evil we have at command, for the production of acts of the useful sort, and the prevention of acts of the contrary sort" (James Mill), *i.e.*, of acts tending to promote pleasure and prevent pain.

The bases of Hedonism. § 45. Now this view is supported mainly by two considerations.—

Based partly on a psychological theory of pleasure as the only rational end. (1) In its older form it was made to rest mainly on a *psychological* argument founded on what was supposed to be the nature of desire and motive. Every one desires what he believes will be pleasurable, and for the sake of the pleasure which he expects that it will give. It is the pleasure that is desired, and not the thing for its own sake. Desiring a thing and thinking it pleasurable are, Mill says, but two ways of expressing the same fact. Pleasure, Spencer says, is but another name for that kind of feeling which we seek to bring into consciousness, and pain for that kind which we seek to keep out of it. Therefore, pleasure is the only ultimate object of desire.

Other things being only means—virtue included. Pleasure can be obtained, to be sure, only by means of things, but things are only means and intermediate ends; the pleasure itself is the ultimate end and good in itself. We desire water to

drink, but, strictly speaking, it is not the water that we desire, but the pleasure of drinking. And indeed "desire is only another name for the idea of a future pleasure." "Pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends, and all desirable things are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pains" (Mill).

Thus, as we will only what we desire, and desire only pleasure, it follows that pleasure is the only natural end and motive of human action. Therefore conduciveness to pleasure is the ultimate standard by which the goodness and badness, rightness and wrongness, of conduct are to be measured.

"Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we *ought* to do as well as to determine what we *shall* do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, and on the other the chain of causes and effects are fastened to their throne" (Bentham).

(2) Latterly, this psychological argument has been supplemented by a *biological* one from what is supposed to be the nature of pleasure, and its relation to life.—Thus (2) it cannot be denied that every living creature naturally strives to prolong its own conscious existence. But what is vitalizing or life-prolonging is for that reason pleasurable. Pleasure is the result and index of an increase of vitality; pain, of a decrease. In other words, pains are the correlatives of whatever processes tend to depress and destroy life, while pleasures are the correlatives of whatever tends to augment it. Pleasure thus guides living creatures towards what is

And partly  
on a biological  
and philosophical  
theory, that  
pleasure is  
identical  
with life—



vitalizing and life-giving, and pain deters them from what is harmful. Thus every creature naturally seeks pleasure, as it naturally seeks life, because pleasure and life are virtually but two aspects of the same thing. Pleasure is therefore the natural end of all action and guide of life.

This principle, that the pleasurable and the vitalizing are identical, is subject, it is admitted, to some apparent exceptions. Excessive pleasures are followed by depression and collapse, and violent pains are often followed by revival and increase of life. But such exceptions, it is maintained, when rightly understood only help to prove the general rule.

And that this is implied in the very possibility of evolution.

(ii) And this view of the relation of pleasure to life is confirmed by another consideration. It cannot be denied as a matter of fact, that every creature seeks what is pleasurable, and avoids what is painful. Now, if what is pleasurable had been unfavourable to vitality, and what is painful had been vitalizing, then the whole life of every creature, being spent in the pursuit of pleasure, would for that reason have been spent in undermining its own vitality; and all life would, in course of time, have destroyed itself, and become extinct. The very fact, therefore, that an evolution and multiplication of living creatures has taken place on earth, proves that life and pleasure coincide.

Thus it is proved that pleasure is the natural end of every living creature; from which it follows that it is the natural standard by which to judge the goodness or badness of actions.

Hence the standard of judgment must be the tendency of  
 § 46. What then will be the standard of conduct according to Hedonism? To speak correctly, we must make a distinction here between the end

and the standard. The end or good is pleasure. The standard, strictly speaking, is the general idea of those kinds of action—those intended results—which (whether pleasurable or not in themselves) are most conducive as means to the greatest happiness on the whole. Every individual has to form such an idea for himself, and carry it about with him, and measure every new action according to it.

actions to  
promote  
pleasure.

How then does the individual obtain this standard-idea of what actions are most conducive to happiness? (1) He forms it partly from his own experiences of what has been most conducive to happiness in his own life. From what has happened to himself in particular cases in the past, he draws inductive conclusions to what will happen generally, and thus at last arrives at a general idea of the means most conducive to happiness on the whole.

How the  
idea of the  
hedonistic  
standard is  
acquired.

Partly, by the  
personal ex-  
periences of  
the indivi-  
dual.

(2) But his own experiences are limited in range and long in being acquired, so that, if he had to depend on them alone, he would be badly off. But in reality the human race have been learning from the very beginning of their history on earth what lines of action are beneficial and otherwise, and have embodied the results of their collective experiences in maxims and rules, manners and customs; and every one accepts these maxims and customs, in the main as his own standard (thus profiting by the accumulated wisdom of former times), and adapts them to his own circumstances.

Partly, by the  
the collective  
experience  
of the race.

Thus, in the pursuit of the greatest pleasure, the individual is not limited to his own experiences for guidance, but benefits by the collective experiences of the race.

Different forms assumed by the hedonistic system.

§ 47. Still the hedonist theory, though apparently so simple, has assumed different forms at different times, the main ground of division being the question : Whose pleasure is it that each person is to make his ultimate end and standard? This question has caused the hedonistic system to assume two principal forms :—

Egoism—the pleasure of self as standard.

I. *Egoistic and Individualistic Hedonism*,—according to which every individual makes his own happiness to be his ultimate end, and his idea of what is conducive to his own greatest happiness on the whole to be his standard of conduct ; so that, though one may spend much time and labour in promoting the interests of others, yet it is merely in the expectation that others will promote his own interests in return. For the only pleasure and pain that he can really feel is always his own pleasure and pain ; and his only object of desire is ultimately what will give pleasure to himself, or relieve his own pains. The pleasure of others interests him only in so far as others may be necessary to his own pleasure.

Goodness identified with prudence.

Thus, according to this view, conduct is *egoistic* and *ego-altruistic*, but never purely altruistic or disinterested. The maxim of this system is, Every one for himself. It is therefore *individualistic*, and its virtue is *prudence*.

“The constantly proper end on the part of every individual at the moment of action is his own real greatest happiness from that moment to the end of his life.”

Altruism—the pleasure of all as standard.

II. *Altruistic and Universalistic Hedonism*,—<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> according to which the highest end to every individual is pleasure in general—not his own pleasure

merely but the pleasure of all, in which his own is included—or, as it has sometimes been expressed, the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

This, which is the form now commonly held, introduces an element entirely different from the other form. It supposes that the individual can feel the pleasures and pains of others, and identify their interests, to some extent, with his own. This supposes a developed capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling, which will impel one to promote the good of others, and deter him from injustice to others. This capacity of fellow-feeling is therefore the conscience of the hedonistic system; and the question, how this capacity of disinterested sentiment originates, forms the main ground of distinction between—

Conscience  
identified  
with sym-  
pathy.

(a) The *older hedonistic system* of Bentham, Bain and Mill, which ignored all innate and instinctive elements of mind, and tried to explain everything by our own personal experiences, and therefore tried to show that sympathy grows up in the lifetime of each individual by automatic imitation, and transference of feeling from the interests of self to those of others through association; so that though born egoistic, he is made more or less altruistic by education and the experiences of life; and—

Two forms—  
hedonism  
without the  
theory of  
evolution.

(b) The *newer evolutionary hedonism* of Spencer and Leslie Stephen, who admit that sympathy and social feeling exist in the mind as tendencies from birth, and are in this sense innate and instinctive; but avail themselves of the theory of mental and social evolution to show that sympathy and social feeling have been developed by the successive experiences of ages, as a necessary condi-

Hedonism  
founded on  
the theory of  
evolution.

tion of the growth of the social organism ; and have been registered in the structure of the bodily organism and brain, and handed down with it by inheritance, so that they are now *hereditary*, and *innate* in every individual. They have indeed been acquired by experience, but it has been by the accumulated experience of all our ancestors.

This system is therefore *collectivist*, and its virtue is *sympathy* and *social feeling*. These systems require separate consideration. Hence :—

The egoistic standard of self-love—prudence as fundamental virtue.

**XVI. Pleasure as Standard—Egoistic Hedonism.**

§ 48. I. According to *Egoistic Hedonism*, the one ultimate object of desire and end of action to every individual is his own preservation and pleasure ; and the only standard of conduct to every individual is the general idea which he has acquired of what lines of action are most conducive to his own greatest pleasure on the whole ; and to the individual, actions are right and wrong in proportion as they tend to promote or hinder ultimately his own greatest pleasure. It is necessary to undergo toils and hardships indeed, but these, if voluntary, are only means to greater pleasure afterwards. It is necessary to subordinate one's own interests in many respects to those of others, but it is only because the help of others is necessary for other and higher interests of one's own.

This system seems to be based, therefore, on the principle of the ancient Sophists, that "the man is the measure of all things," i.e., things are good or bad, right or wrong, to every individual according as they affect his own personal feelings.

But, if it be thus natural for every one to seek

only his own interests, how did men come to combine and co-operate together in society, in which every individual is compelled to subordinate his own interests, more or less, to those of others, as if he felt for their good as well as his own?

Difficulty—how to explain the origin of society, and the social feelings and motives, and of political government.

The origin of society is explained in this way.—Men are indeed naturally egoistic; and in the original state of nature they lived apart from each other, each caring only for himself, and claiming everything needed to satisfy his own desires. But this made the state of nature to be a state of warfare. Hence individuals began to find that their own preservation and happiness depended to a great extent on other individuals; and that their own greatest safety and happiness was to be obtained by co-operation with others. Hence at last they agreed to join together, and form themselves into a community by making a “social contract,” in which each individual undertakes to subordinate his own good in some respects to that of others, and contribute to the good of other individuals and of society as a whole, for the sake of the greater good which he receives in return from the co-operation of other individuals, and the protection of society collectively; and in which all agree to transfer their personal rights in part to a common arbitrator or governor, who will dispense them fairly for the greatest benefit of the whole.

The original “state of nature.”

The “social contract.”

Society and Government.

But the one ultimate motive to every individual continues to be self-love, or desire of his own happiness, and all his apparently various springs of action are but modes of this fundamental one. So that we are required to believe that friendship and affection, public spirit and patriotism, admiration

All the springs of action are but modes of self-love—all virtues, of prudence.

Hence ego-  
altruism,

for worth and religious trust, are all prompted by desire of pleasure to one's self; and that every one values friends, parents, country, heroes, God, only as the instruments of his own happiness. Virtue, therefore, can never rise above ego-altruism, or doing good to others for the sake of good to ourselves.

And its two  
classes of  
motives.

And there are apparently two principal ways in which we may be led to promote the good of others for the sake of good to ourselves—two sources of ego-altruistic motive—

(1) We may do good to other persons in the hope that they will return the good, either in kind by substantial services of the same sort, or by praise and flattery; and, in some cases, to avoid the penalties which society and state impose.

(2) Or we may do good to others in order to relieve ourselves of the pain which we cannot avoid feeling at the sight of others suffering, *viz.*, by automatic reproduction of their suffering within our own minds.

This way of  
thinking  
best exem-  
plified in the  
philosophy  
of Hobbes.

§ 49. Thus Hobbes, the most out-spoken modern representative of this system, reduces all the higher emotions to modes of selfishness. Thus :—

How Hobbes  
reduces all  
the higher  
feelings and  
springs of  
action to  
self-love.

*Benevolence* is the inclination to do good to others in the hope of obtaining greater good for ourselves in return; and sometimes, to relieve the pain imposed upon ourselves by witnessing the sufferings of others, which we cannot help reproducing in ourselves by automatic imitation. *Pity* is this fiction or imagination of similar pain of our own, which arises in our minds on witnessing the suffering of others. *Charity* is the pleasurable consciousness of our own superiority, which we experience in relieving the wants of others. *Friend-*

*ship* is a consciousness of the pleasure and benefits which we receive from the society and assistance of another person. *Gratitude* is a "lively sense of future benefits," excited by benefits already received. *Reverence* and *religious feelings* are cultivated as means of pacifying and securing the favour of the supernatural powers. *Laughter* and feelings of humour he explains as the sudden elation of superiority and self-glory, which springs up in ourselves on witnessing an unexpected fall, weakness, or degradation in others whom we thought equal or superior to ourselves.

In short, according to Hobbes, "whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth *good*; and the object of his hate and aversion, *evil*. For these words, good and evil, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them; there being nothing simply nor absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves."

Hobbes's view of the ego-altruistic origin of pity and benevolence, *viz.*, from an automatic and involuntary reproduction within ourselves of the sufferings of others, is well illustrated by an anecdote told of Hobbes himself by one of his friends. "One time, I remember, going in the Strand, a poor and infirm old man begged his alms; he, beholding him with eyes of pity and compassion, put his hand in his pocket and gave him six pence. Said a divine that stood by, Would you have done this, if it had not been Christ's command? 'Yea,' said he. 'Why?' quoth the other. 'Because,' said he, 'I was in pain to consider the miserable condition of the old man; and now my alms, giving him some relief, doth also ease me.'"

Helvetius again went so far as to reduce all



~~happiness to pleasures of sense.~~ "Man being by nature sensible of no other pleasures than those of the senses, these pleasures are the only objects of his desires and passions," *viz.* of his avarice, ambition, pride, friendship, and the like. And if we desire other things, it is not for their own sake, but only as means to future pleasures of sense.

Extremes  
included  
within the  
limits of  
Egoism.

§ 50. Nevertheless, even within the limits of egoism, there is room for a wide range of opinion as to the best way of attaining the greatest possible amount of pleasure. This is well illustrated by the ancient thinkers Aristippus and Epicurus, who may be taken as marking the extremes.—

Cyrenaicism

According to Aristippus of Cyrene, the surest way to attain the greatest possible amount of pleasure, and thereby the end of life, is to cultivate to the utmost all possible capacities of enjoyment, and gratify them to the utmost; and in gratifying them, to utilize always to the utmost all the opportunities of enjoyment afforded by the present moment, avoiding the mistake of sacrificing the present, which is sure, in order to provide for the future, which is always doubtful. He assumed, therefore, that the greatest amount of pleasure can be attained by directly aiming at pleasure.

Epicurean-  
ism

Epicurus of Athens, on the contrary, thought that the direct pursuit of pleasure generally defeats its own purpose, and that the more eagerly we seek pleasure, the less pleasure as a rule do we attain. Felicity, therefore, consists not so much in positive pleasure as in freedom from pain, and a calm and contented mind; and is best attained, not by multiplying our capacities of enjoyment, and thereby our wants and desires,

but rather by reducing our wants and desires within the narrowest limits and learning to be content with little, removing from our life all probable causes of unrest, and concentrating our enjoyments upon such things as are easily obtained, and cannot easily be taken away, such as the beauties of literature, science, and art (the refined pleasures).

Thus, while Cyrenaicism tended to sensuous self-indulgence, the Epicureanism of Epicurus himself bordered on asceticism—its chief weakness being its discouragement of the active strenuous life, as inconsistent with the Epicurean calm of mind.

The egoistic theory of the good, however, is generally combined, as in Hobbes, with the political and social theories of the standard. The collective experiences of society (once established by social contract), and the deliberations of the legislator, find out what rules of action are most conducive to the greatest pleasure of society collectively; and society and the state impose these rules on individuals as social manners and customs, or as political laws, and make it to be *the self-interest of individuals to submit to them by imposing penalties on their violation*.

But the egoistic requires to be supplemented by the legal Standards.

But egoism is practically inconsistent with any kind of morality properly so-called, and has few or no advocates at the present day. "As ethical philosophy, it recognised no duties which it could not reduce into debtor and creditor accounts on the ledgers of self-love, where no coin was sterling which could not be rendered into agreeable sensations."

**XVII. Pleasure as Standard—Altruistic Hedonism.**

§ 51. II. According to *Universalistic* or *Altruistic Hedonism* (called by Mill *Utilitarianism*) all desire is indeed desire of pleasure, but the

The altruistic standard—pleasure in general—with sym.

pathy as its  
conscience,  
and benevo-  
lence as its  
virtue.

pleasure which is the highest good is not the pleasure of any particular individual, but pleasure in general—universal pleasure, or, failing that, the greatest pleasure of the greatest possible number. And the duty of the individual is to promote pleasure, but not his own pleasure alone, but that of others and all, so far as may lie in his power. And the standard to every individual is the general idea of those lines of action which are most conducive to general pleasure, or the greatest pleasure of the greatest number.

Thus the *rule of egoism*, or regard for self, is supplemented by that of *altruism*, or disinterested regard for the good of others; and the virtue or morality of the individual comes to be identical with a disinterested disposition to subordinate his own interests more or less to those of others, at the prompting of sympathy or fellow-feeling. The fundamental virtues of the system, therefore, are sympathy and the social feelings rising out of it.

This view, therefore, differs essentially from egoism in these points.—(1) That it maintains the possibility of altruistic or disinterested conduct—of beneficence and justice towards others, not for our own sake, but for the sake of others.

(2) That, while the other system takes away all meaning from morality, this system gives a distinct meaning to rightness and virtue by making them consist in disinterested benevolence and fairness to others in the pursuit and distribution of pleasures; and makes this regard for others to be not merely a means towards our own happiness, but something which is proximately right and good in itself (though ultimately only

Contrasted  
with ego-  
ism

as a means towards general happiness).

§ 52. This system supposes, therefore, that we can represent possible future pleasures of ourselves and others in idea, compare them in respect of value, and choose beforehand the best, and adapt our actions so as to realize the best. Hence it raises the question, in what the comparative values of different pleasures consist.

It supposes a power of computing the values of future pleasures.

(1) Now the older advocates of the system, such as Bentham, assumed that the value of pleasures consists wholly in the quantity of agreeable sensation that they give. Any one pleasure is just as good as another—"push-pin is as good as poetry"—provided that it be equal in quantity. Hence, in judging between possible future pleasures, we have only to estimate beforehand the quantity of each, and choose those which, when added together, will amount to the greatest quantity of pleasure on the whole.

By what Standard then are their values to be estimated?

1. View of Bentham and older hedonists, that the only Standard of value is quantity.

But quantity takes different forms. It takes the forms of duration: of two pleasures otherwise equal the more durable will be the better;—of intensity: one pleasure may be more intense than another of the same duration;—of extensity: one may be shared by a larger number of persons than another;—of fecundity: one may harmonize with, or lead on to, a number of others as its consequences;—of purity: one may be more free than another from painful accompaniments or consequences.

Different forms of quantity.

"Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure—  
Such marks in pleasures and in pains endure."

These are Bentham's dimensions of value in pleasures. And in regulating our actions, we have to choose between different ends of action by computing, according to these criteria, the amount of pleasure which they are likely to give. The wise man will choose his ends and regulate his actions so as to

Bentham's calculus of pleasures.

realize the greatest quantity of pleasure possible; and the good man will take care that the pleasure realized is not his own alone, but includes also that of others. But as pleasures cannot be enjoyed collectively, but only separately and successively, the greatest quantity will have to be conceived as *the summation of a series*--the greatest possible *sum total* of pleasures.

Objections  
to this.

But this account of pleasure, as measureable by quantity only, exposed the hedonistic system in its older form to much criticism. It seemed to give most value to pleasures of the lower senses, as being the most intense in degree, and laid the system open to the charge of sensualism. The pleasures of the child, of the debauchee, even of the lunatic, or even, as Carlyle said, of the hog wallowing in his wash, might be as good as that of the sage or the hero. That ancient Greek would be justified who, after he had been cured of insanity by skilful treatment, sued before a court the doctors who had cured him, on the plea that they had robbed his life of its greatest happiness.

2. View of  
John Stuart  
Mill that  
pleasures  
differ in quality  
as well  
as quantity.

(2) J. S. Mill, however, attempted to save the system from such objections, by trying to show that pleasures differ in *quality* and *kind* as well as *quantity*, that a pleasure equal or inferior to another in respect of quantity may nevertheless be superior in quality; and that the true hedonist will choose his pleasures, not so much according to present intensity, as according to their worth in respect of kind, and may choose pleasures of lesser quantity for the sake of their higher quality. "Human beings have faculties higher than the animal appetites," and therefore enjoy higher pleasures than these. "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig

satisfied." In other words, a smaller amount of a higher kind of pleasure may greatly outweigh a larger amount of a lower kind; worth and dignity of pleasure are better than quantity.

And we can distinguish between lower and higher pleasures by such criteria as these :—

The lowest pleasures will be those the materials of which are consumed in the enjoyment, and which are therefore short-lived; those which are limited to an individual, and therefore selfish; those which produce weariness, fatigue, satiety, disgust; those which leave injurious organic or mental effects behind them; and those which belong to the animal department of human nature. These are distinguished as coarse, gross, unrefined, and low.

The highest, on the contrary, will be those the materials of which are not consumed in using; those which are not limited to individuals, but common to all; which do not produce fatigue, satiety, or disgust, and leave no injurious effects behind; and which engage the peculiarly human, and most highly developed powers of mind. These may be distinguished as *refined* pleasures, and include especially those of intellect, social intercourse, benevolence, duty and art.

Such differences as these are differences of *quality* or *kind*, and not of quantity merely. And therefore it was quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact that, though nothing is ultimately desirable but pleasure, yet some kinds of pleasure are intrinsically more desirable and valuable than others from their *quality*, apart from their mere intensity. Hence, in making pleasure the aim of life, the wise man will aim not at all pleasures alike according to their quantity, but mainly at the higher and better ones. Thus the charge made against the system, of having a degrading and sensualistic tendency, is shown to be groundless.

Criteria of quality.

Coarseness.

Refinement.

Hedonism consistent with the pursuit of refined pleasures, and therefore not sensualistic.

"There is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation." ~

But morality  
supposes  
obligation  
and con-  
science.

§ 53. But being altruistic, it follows that the altruistic system supposes a spring of action, or moral motive, which impels all men to act for the good of others, and to subordinate their own interests to those of others, and makes them feel themselves under an obligation, or bound by duty, to do so. In other words, it supposes some faculty or capacity which will perform the same function in the hedonistic system that conscience does in the intuitional.

What then  
will be the  
source of  
obligation  
according to  
Hedonism?

What kind of conscience or moral faculty, then, will be consistent with the hedonist principle, that pleasure is the ultimate object of all desire? It can only be a developed capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling which will enable each person to feel more or less the pleasures and pains of others, and identify them with his own, so as to make pleasure in general (and not his own solely) his ultimate end of life; and not only so, but will give him a conviction that it is his duty, or that he is under an obligation to do so.

Sympathy  
with others.

Difference as  
to the origin  
of sympathy  
and the  
social feel-  
ings

Now this question of the origin of the moral motive-force and ground of obligation which impels to altruistic conduct, is the main ground of difference between the older utilitarian system of Bentham, Bain and Mill, and the form given to the theory latterly by Spencer and Stephen in accordance with the later hypothesis of evolution (Evolutionary Hedonism), and these systems have to be considered

separately. Thus :—

(A) The *older utilitarians*, Bentham, James Mill, J. S. Mill, were led by their experiential psychology to reject all innate tendencies and *a priori* intuitions. They could not, therefore, recognise any form of conscience that could not be produced in every person by the circumstances and experiences of his own life. How, then, were they to account for the tendency to fellow-feeling and disinterested conduct, in which altruistic hedonism makes morality to consist—the tendency to subordinate one's own interests to the good of others? They tried to account for this altruistic impulse by supposing it to be the result of a mental development which takes place in the life-time of every individual; and which, by means of imitation, association and habit, produces at last a mass of disinterested feeling that impels the individual to promote the good of others, and deters him from doing them injury, even without any thought of good to himself in return; so that, though born naturally egoistic, the experiences which he undergoes make him at last more or less altruistic. Thus :—

(1) Every one is born with an instinctive tendency to *automatic imitation*, which produces again a tendency to sympathetic feeling in this way.—The outward manifestations of pleasure, pain, and other feelings, which the child perceives in other persons, impress themselves on the child's mind; and the mental impression thus produced tends to reproduce automatically in the child the same bodily manifestations; and the bodily manifestations thus automatically reproduced tend to reproduce the mental states of which they are the manifestations; and thus the

Theory of the older utilitarians as to the origin of the social and moral feeling.

Development in every individual during his own lifetime.

(1) By automatic reproduction of the expressions and feelings of others, rising into sympathy.



feelings of others are reproduced in the child. And, when this capacity of having the feelings of others reproduced in one is fully developed, it rises into that capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling, which is the basis of conscience or moral sentiment, enabling one to feel the pleasures and pains of others. The capacity of fellow-feeling thus acquired is the basis of the moral conscience.

(2)  
And trans-  
ference of  
interest from  
ends to ac-  
tions, lead-  
ing to other  
disinterested  
feelings.

(2) And this at first automatically produced tendency to sympathy is supplemented by other tendencies in the same direction, due to the principles of association and *transference of interest*. The child finds that certain forms of action are followed by praise or blame, reward or punishment, from parents, teachers, friends; and by the admiration or disgust of society in general; or by the penalties of the law. These consequences produce feelings of pleasure or pain, hope or fear, pride or shame. After some repetition, these feelings become permanently associated with these kinds of action, and are excited and felt in connexion with them ever afterwards, and grow into permanent habits of liking and disgust towards such actions. Hence these associated feelings continue to be felt in connexion with such actions even after they have ceased to have any other practical consequences to self.

Thus feelings, originally excited by the pleasurable and painful consequences to ourselves of certain classes of actions, become transferred to the actions themselves, and thus come to be felt in connection with the actions even without the original consequences. In other words, these feelings of liking and disgust towards actions become at last habits of disinterested feeling. That is, we come

to like or dislike such actions on their own account, without thinking any longer of any benefit or harm that may follow to ourselves.

The process of transference is most clearly explained by James Mill. "We perform moral acts at first from authority. Our parents tell us that we ought to do this, ought not to that. They have two sets of influences with which to work upon us; praise and blame, reward and punishment. The idea of ourselves performing certain acts is associated with the idea of our being praised and rewarded; performing certain other acts, with the idea of being blamed and punished, so closely that the ideas become at last indissoluble. And we find that not only our parents act in this manner but all other parents. We find that grown people act in this manner not only towards children, but towards each other. The associations, therefore, are unbroken, general, and all-comprehending."

Explained  
by James  
Mill.

Thus these acquired capacities of sympathy with other persons, and habitual liking and disgust towards certain forms of action affecting persons, become associated and fused together into one complex mass of sentiment, which prompts to action for the general good, and deters from selfish and cruel action; and makes one feel approval of, and satisfaction with the one kind, and regret, shame and remorse with regard to the other. And the prevalence of these disinterested sentiments over purely egoistic tendencies constitutes *virtue*; and the fundamental virtues are justice and beneficence.

Hence by association of these tendencies, the capacity of disinterested feeling and tendency called conscience.

In this way Mill and others think that hedonism can render a sufficient account of conscience, *viz.*, as a capacity of feeling propelling to beneficial conduct in general and deterring from the opposite, and that without falling back on any mysterious intuitions or instincts inconsistent with the psychology of experience.

This account evidently assumes, however, that

But such derivation of altruistic from egoistic feelings involves a contradiction

the sympathetic feelings and moral sentiments are not at all essential to human life, since every individual is assumed to be at first without them. It obviously involves also the paradox of making altruistic feelings to be derived from egoistic ones. Indeed the altruism accounted for in this way can hardly be more than ego-altruism.

Modern theory of evolution applied to explain the social and moral feelings.

§ 54. (B) The newer *evolutionary* hedonism modifies the system in some points, and seeks to strengthen it by applying to it the modern theory of *mental and social evolution*. By means of this new hypothesis it improves upon the rather superficial psychology held by the older utilitarians; and overcomes the aversion to innate tendencies by showing how tendencies may at the same time be both innate and acquired by experience, *viz.*, in the sense that they have been acquired through the continuous experiences of our ancestors, accumulated since the beginning of the race, and transmitted to us as inherited instincts.

Society shown to be an organism in which the good of the organs is identical with that of the whole

In this way they are able to show that society is an organism, and necessarily grows as an organism grows, and is not merely a mechanical aggregate of units drawn together by considerations of self interest (as the older hedonism assumed); that the direct practical object of pursuit is not pleasure itself, but the health of the social organism which makes pleasure possible; and that the disinterested social feelings are not produced in an accidental way by accidental circumstances in the life-time of each individual, but are necessary to the existence of the social organism, developed along with it, registered in the physical constitution of individuals, and handed

down with it by inheritance, and therefore now innate and instinctive in every mind. Thus :—

(i) First as to *organic and mental evolution*.—

The individual living being begins as a structureless particle of protoplasm, and its growth proceeds by (1) a progressive differentiation of parts, and division of labour or function between different parts, by which the quantity and quality of the work performed is bettered ; and (2) a continuous integration and co-ordination of these parts and functions, by which they are all made to co-operate for one common result, *vis.*, the conservation and perfection of the life of the organism as a whole, and in such a way that it is by contributing to the life and perfection of the whole that each part contributes to its own perfection (for it is in this that organization consists). And this same differentiation and integration of functions is made to explain not only the development of organism, but that of mind also, as going on *pari passu* with that of the organism.

Now this organic and mental development is seen to repeat itself in the life-history of every individual from microscopic germ-cell to maturity ; and the new evolution theory consists in extending it to the life-history of the race, and trying to show that the race has grown as the individual grows ; and that our bodily and mental powers have been acquired by gradual differentiations and integrations extending through the lives of our ancestors since the beginning of life, accumulating from generation to generation, and transmitted by inheritance.

We are thus made to be what we are by inheriting the accumulated results of all the experiences and acquisitions of all our ancestors. The development

Theory of organic and mental evolution by differentiation and integration of functions.

Applied to explain the origin of the race, bodily and mental.

Hence every

mind inherits and reproduces powers and tendencies acquired by ancestors.

bodily and mental which every individual undergoes in his own life, is but a repetition or reproduction of that which has been going on for innumerable ages in the collective life of the race. And among these inherited tendencies we inherit our sympathetic, altruistic, social instincts. We do not acquire them for ourselves, as Mill supposed. They come to us, as an essential part of our nature from the remotest past. Thus the experimental and *a priori* systems of psychology are reconciled, what is a *priori* being shown to be at the same time of experiential origin.

And hence organic nature of society, and dependence of individual on the whole, as organ on organism.

(ii) Next as to *social evolution*.—What is true of organism and individual mind is true also of collective mind or society. This also is an organism, and is not *made*, but *grows*. Individuals are the organs of the larger organism, and it is by contributing to the common life and perfection of the whole collective organism, that they can promote their own life and perfection—for it is in this reciprocity of function and unity of interests that organisation consists, and on it life itself depends.

There never was a time, therefore, at which individuals existed separately, each by himself, or at which they came together for the first time, and agreed to live together in society for mutual protection and assistance. The "social contract" is a fiction. It is by mutual interaction and co-operation as organs of an organism, or members of a society, from the very beginning, that men have come to be what they are, physically, mentally, and socially; and it is as organs of a social organism that they live, move and have their being.

Hence conscience and social feeling a necessary product of

(iii) Next as to the origin of conscience and moral motives. This view of the origin of mind and society by organic development in the course of ages, explains that of the social feelings also which link men together in society. much more

satisfactorily than the older view. These feelings and tendencies make the unity and common life of the social organism, and have necessarily developed along with it, and become engrained in the physical and mental structure of individuals, and have been handed down by inheritance, and gone on deepening and accumulating from age to age. It is useless to ask why people should sympathize with other people, or why they should feel bound to keep their contracts. If they had not acquired such feelings and habits and maintained them from the beginning as a property of the race, they would have disappeared from the face of the earth altogether.

adaptation to circumstances, struggle for existence, and natural selection.

Peoples who have failed to develop moral feelings and tendencies, and the spirit of mutual help and co-operation which they make possible, have perished altogether in the struggle for existence, or remained in a state of savagery; and those in which they are most highly developed have taken, or will take possession of the world by natural selection and survival of the fittest.

The development of disinterested motives is by automatic sympathy and transference of interest from means to ends as described by earlier utilitarians (§ 53); but with this difference, that it is not accomplished in the life-time of the individual as they supposed, but during the life-time of the race, and with the help of natural selection and inheritance

R

(iv) Finally as to the *proximate end*. The older utilitarians, such as Bentham, assumed that pleasures are definite quantities which can be compared, measured, summed up, and calculated beforehand; and that men are always engaged in calculating

Hence to individuals the direct end of action is not their

own pleasure, but the health of the social organism.

beforehand the quantities of pleasure which different lines of action will give, and regulating their actions in such a way as to realize the greatest sum-total of pleasures on the whole; as the trader regulates his traffic in such a way as to realize the greatest possible sum of money.

But the principle that society is an organism, shows (1) that the greatest pleasure can be attained, not by seeking the pleasure of individuals, but by promoting the order and perfection of the social organism as a whole. Therefore, the end which is to be directly aimed at in actual practice is not pleasure itself, but "the health of the social organism." The ultimate end, indeed, is happiness, but it is to be obtained not by seeking happiness directly, but by seeking that which is the ultimate condition of happiness—the order and prosperity of the community.

And evolution has provided the race with instinctive feelings and impulses towards this end, so that hedonistic calculus is generally unnecessary.

(2) And according to the new theory, the transference of interest from original ends to means, has been carried so far in the course of ages that such calculations are unnecessary. It has been found by universal experience that what promotes the collective well-being of the community, promotes thereby the good of the individuals, who are its organs; and such lines of action have thereby become associated with feelings of approval and satisfaction; and these associative connections have been handed down and confirmed by inheritance. Hence every individual is born with instinctive tendencies to approve of such actions, and disapprove of their opposites, without thinking of his own personal interests. And yet such disinterested conduct is found to be conducive to his highest interest in the

main. Individuals do not themselves require to calculate; nature has done the calculating for them.

(3) Or, if hereditary impulse and feeling do ever require to be supplemented by ethical thought, still the right method of inquiry is not to inquire what will give pleasure to this or that particular person, and how much pleasure it will give him (as the older method with its "calculus of pleasures" assumed); but to deduce from the laws of life and the conditions of physical, mental and social development, what kinds of action will be most conducive to the prosperity of society collectively, in the assurance that these are what will be most conducive ultimately to the happiness of the individuals contained in it. And the rules thus arrived at deductively are to be recognised as laws of conduct irrespective of any further calculation of results. Indeed evolution and natural selection will work out at last such a pre-established harmony between individual impulse and collective good, that each individual will feel his own good to be identical with that of others and of the whole, and to be attainable only by his fulfilling his function as a member of the whole; and in which law will have become superfluous, and obligation meaningless.

"Altruism will attain a level such that the ministration to others' happiness will become a daily need; a level such that the lower egoistic satisfactions will become continually subordinated to this higher altruistic satisfaction" (Spencer).

In this way they avoid also the paradox with which hedonism used to be charged. The end was said to be pleasure, and yet it was an obvious fact that the more directly and eagerly one seeks pleasure, the less pleasure does he attain; and that most

Or if it is ever necessary to discuss the rightness or wrongness of actions, the method is not calculation of individual interests, but deduction from laws and conditions of life and collective prosperity.



pleasure is attained by those who do not seek pleasure, but aim at something else. For even Mill admitted that "only those are happy who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness. Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so."

But if the older system attached too much importance to deliberate calculation in the judgment of actions, it is obvious that this latter system tends to exaggerate the part played by blind instinct, and to reduce will to be but a mechanism of impulses.

### XVIII. Pleasure as Standard— Criticism.

Pleasure admitted to be a standard by which actions may be judged.

§ 55. It cannot be denied that happiness is generally, if not universally, regarded as a good, and therefore as a standard of ethical judgment. Indeed many who have disclaimed the system under the name of *hedonism* (*hedoné*, pleasure), as being too suggestive of merely sensuous enjoyment, have acknowledged it under the name of *eudæmonism* (*eudæmonia*, blessedness), as suggesting happiness of a more refined kind. But this, it will be seen, is nothing more than advancing from Aristippus to Epicurus, from Hobbes and Bentham to J. S. Mill, from pleasure measured by quantity to pleasure judged according to quality or kind, from sensuous pleasure to refined.

But is it the ultimate moral standard?

But to say that pleasure is a standard according to which actions may be judged is one thing, and to say that it is the ultimate good, and therefore the standard by which the *moral rightness* or *wrongness* of actions is to be judged, is a very different thing. Hedonists, however, maintain that it *is* the ultimate good, and the standard of morality. "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the

reverse of happiness ; and by happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain" (Mill) Therefore moral science has to consider this claim of hedonism, that pleasure or conduciveness to pleasure is the ultimate moral standard.

Now the claim of hedonism to be accepted as the moral standard may be considered from two points of view, psychological and moral. Thus :—

§ 56. I. We may ask first whether the *psychological and biological assumptions* which underlie the system are correct.

(A) And under this head the first thing to be considered is the theory of *pleasure and its relation to desire and to life*, which is the psychological basis of the system. Is this theory correct ?

(i) In the first place, it is to be objected that it identifies pleasure with *happiness*. It uses the word not only (1) for the feelings resulting from the stimulation of sensory nerves, for which it is appropriate, but also (2) for the feelings of satisfaction which result from the filling up of the higher wants, as the satisfaction of doing one's duty, of being what one should be, and the like, to which the term pleasure does not properly apply.

Mill saw the anomaly, and sought to get over it by his distinction between quantity and quality of pleasures ; but surely the satisfaction of rectifying an injustice, and the pleasure derived, *e.g.*, from a warm bath or a lump of sugar, differ in something more than *quality* in Mill's sense. It is rather a difference of kind. Mill, indeed, admitted it to be such, but yet insisted on including both kinds under the name of pleasure. But things so different

I. Are the psychological and biological assumptions warranted, on which hedonism is based ?

(A) It can be shown that the theory of pleasure and pain on which it is based is incorrect.

(i) Pleasure and happiness are not identical.

should be called by different names. The one kind is properly pleasure, and the other is happiness.

But differ in origin.

For *pleasure* is properly the feeling resulting from the stimulation of a passive capacity of sen- sation and therefore of sensory nerves. It is not an original and natural want, but may become an acquired one, *i.e.*, a longing may arise to have sensory nerves stimulated for the sake of the pleasurable feeling which they give.

*Happiness* on the other hand is the satisfaction which arises out of the consciousness that the needs, wants, imperfections of the self are being overcome, and the self thus far realized and perfected. It does not consist in the stimulation of any capacity of sensation, but in the feeling that we are, or are coming to be, what we should be. The self by its nature is always aspiring to become something higher than before; and the consciousness that this becoming has been, or is being in any respect accomplished, is happiness.

Happiness, therefore, is possible only to a rational being which can form a conception of its own self, its own needs, and its own perfection, and be aware of its own realization; and so far from being identical with pleasure, it is possible to the hero in the moment of danger and the martyr on his way to death.

(ii) Pleasure not the only object of desire.

(ii) Again, hedonists base their system largely on the assumption that *the only natural object of desire and motive of action is pleasure*; that in acting we always have the idea and desire of some pleasure in our minds as motive; and that, though some change, or state, or thing is sought, it is never sought for its own sake, but only for the pleasure which it will give rise to. Desiring a thing, and expecting pleasure from the thing, are but two ways of expressing the same fact. It is really the pleasure that we desire, and not the thing. It is admitted, indeed, that there are appa-

rent exceptions to this, but maintained that they do not affect the general principle.

This, however, inverts the real order of the facts. What we normally desire is the thing, or more strictly the change of circumstances and relations, the improvement or increased perfection of our condition, and not the feeling which will result from it. The agreeable feeling (whether it be pleasure, or merely satisfaction, happiness) results from our obtaining the object desired, because we desired it—the feeling itself is not the object of desire, but the result of obtaining that object. And the very fact that the feeling arises in us, supposes that we have desired and obtained something other than the feeling. The feeling is by its very nature the accompaniment or consequence of attaining an object of desire, and not itself the object.

The order of ideas in rational action is really this.—We are aware of some want, deficiency, imperfection in our own self; and think of something the attainment of which would supply the want, and thus far satisfy the aspiration of the self. This object (or more precisely, the improved condition of the self) becomes thereby a motive, or object of desire. And the attainment of the object gives agreeable feeling, because it was desired; or more precisely, because it supplies a felt imperfection of the self, and thus far makes the self more perfect for the time being. ( In other words, the consciousness of want gives rise to the desire of what will supply the want; and the supply of the want gives rise to the feeling of satisfaction; but that feeling was not itself the object of the desire. And it is to be observed that the satis-

What then is the real object of desire, and its relation to pleasure?

The real object of desire is the filling up of a want or imperfection.

Happiness results from attaining the object—pleasure from sense-stimulation only.

faction which results from the attainment of an object of desire is not normally pleasure, but happiness. Pleasure is only what results from the stimulation of sensory nerves.

But may not pleasure itself become an object of desire? Yes; both the pleasure of sense-stimulation, and the happiness which results from the higher kinds of gratification, when once experienced, may be felt afterwards as needs, and thus rise into independent objects of desire, constituting what has been called secondary springs of action. But it is to be observed that the desire of pleasure, for its own sake has a tendency, as Mill admits, to defeat its own purpose, or destroy itself. The more directly we desire and aim at pleasure for its own sake, the less, as a general rule, do we obtain; and pleasure is best obtained when least sought (the paradox of Hedonism).

(iii) Pleasure not identical with an increase of vitality.

(iii) Again, later hedonists have sought to demonstrate their view that pleasure is the only ultimate object of desire, by deducing it from their theory of *the relation of pleasure and pain to life*, viz., that pleasure increases, or is at least an accompaniment and index of an increase of vitality, and that pain decreases it, or marks a decrease. This view seems to involve a mistake as to the nature of pleasure, and the usual confusion between pleasure and happiness. Increase of life, deeper, fuller and more perfect life, is undoubtedly the aspiration of the self, otherwise it would not be a self. And it follows that the progressive attainment of fuller and more perfect life *will* give the feeling of satisfaction which we call happiness; and therefore happiness may reasonably be said to be an index of fulness and perfection of life. (Though even happiness is not an index of fulness of *organic* life, as it frequently accompanies organic

collapse towards death ; which seems to show that the consciousness of self-realization which gives happiness is not wholly a consciousness of expanding organic life, but of a kind of life which rises above the organism.)

But, on the other hand, it is not true of any state that can be called *pleasure* in the strict sense of the word, that it marks an *increase* of life. Pleasure is normally a state of stimulation, and therefore of exercise and expenditure of vitality, not of an increase of it. What it indicates, therefore, is not an increase, but merely the existence of a present fund of life, capable of being turned to account for pleasurable stimulation. An increase of life will make pleasure possible, by making an increase of stimulation possible; but the pleasure is not itself the increase.

Pleasure not an increase but an expenditure of vitality.

(iv) Again, in making pleasure to be the only end, hedonists assume that we are engaged in continual *calculation of the comparative values of different pleasures*—in a continual process of summation and subtraction—in order to determine what lines of conduct will produce the greatest amount of pleasure on the whole. Thus, by adding together the greatest possible amounts of pleasure for successive moments, hours, and days, we form an idea of the greatest possible sum of pleasures attainable in our life as a whole ; and make the end of our life to be the attainment of that sum.

(iv) It is not possible to estimate beforehand the amount and value of future pleasures.

It may be doubted, however, whether such a calculus and summation of pleasures is at all possible. (1) It supposes that we can foresee and estimate precisely the comparative quantities of future pleasures. But pleasures, when sought for

Difficulty of comparing and estimating the comparative

values of  
future pleasures.

their own sake, never turn out to be what they were expected to be. (2) And further, pleasures differ from each other so much as to be practically incommensurable. How can we estimate the comparative values, in terms of pleasure, of playing a game of football and listening to an oratorio of Handel, and state by how much the one is superior to the other? And this incommensurability is still more obvious when we have regard to quality as well as quantity, and compare the pleasures of sense with the higher kinds of happiness.

It seems doubtful, therefore, whether any uniform plan of life can be founded on the comparison and summation of pleasures.

The objection has also been made, that a sum or whole of pleasures involves a contradiction. We live in successive moments, and one pleasure ceases before another begins, so that pleasures cannot be summed up and enjoyed as a single whole. This criticism, however, is of doubtful relevance, as Bentham did not mean, by sum of pleasures, that pleasures could be heaped together in a mass, like a sum of money, and enjoyed simultaneously. What he meant was, a life containing as many pleasures and as few pains as possible.

(B) It can be shown that the attempts to correct and justify hedonism involve an abandonment of its principle.

§ 57. (B) And further, it can be shown that the attempts to explain away what was objectionable in the older (egoistic) forms of hedonism amount, if carried out consistently, to *an abandonment of the true hedonistic principle* of pleasure as the ultimate standard. This seems to be true especially of—

(1) Mill's attempt to make quality the standard.

(1) Mill's distinction between the quality and the quantity of pleasures, between higher pleasures and lower. If pleasure as such be the good in itself,

then it would appear that the only measure of the value of pleasures is the quantity, amount or degree of the pleasure which they give (their intensity and duration, as the older hedonists believed). Many for that reason thought hedonism to be a debasing theory of life. But Mill tried to show that pleasures differ in quality as well as quantity; and that in making pleasure the aim of life, the wise man will select and aim at those pleasures which are "highest" in quality, and reject the lower ones.

This is equivalent to saying that, of two sets of pleasures, equal in the quantity of the pleasure which they give, one may nevertheless be superior to the other in respect of something called "quality." But what is this *quality*, which makes one pleasure to be superior to another equal to it in *quantity*? If one is superior to another, but not in amount of pleasure, then its superiority must consist in something other than pleasure. Mill, therefore, by this distinction makes his hedonist standard of pleasurable-ness to be subordinate to some other and higher standard of value, which is not pleasure.

Implies a standard other than pleasure.

But this is abandoning the hedonist principle, which makes pleasure itself to be the only standard. It is equivalent to saying that, though we should seek pleasures, yet we should select the pleasures which we are to seek, according to some other standard than their pleasurable-ness. Now this agrees exactly with what the intuitionist and idealist systems maintain. We may seek happiness, but in ways subject to a standard which is not itself happiness.

(2) And it is equally true of Spencer's admission, that in order to promote the greatest possible happiness, we must aim, *not directly at the happiness of the separate individuals composing society,*

(2) Spencer's distinction between



proximate  
and ultimate  
objects of  
desire.

but at something else, *viz.*, at *the health of society as a social organism*. This means that we should strive (a) to produce a perfect adjustment and subordination to one another of the desires and passions which constitute the individual mind; and (b) a perfect adjustment to one another of the individual minds which make up society, so that each individual shall find his own good to be realized in and through the common good, as is the case with the organs of an organism. The greatest possible pleasure would follow as a consequence of this perfect health and development of the social organism; but if aimed at directly and for its own sake, it would not be attained at all.

But this confession that we cannot obtain pleasure by aiming at pleasure, is equivalent to abandoning the hedonist principle, that pleasure is the only end and aim. And the perfection of individual and social constitution, which hedonism here adopts as its end, is really the end of the intuitionist and idealist systems.

Thus hedonism, in purifying and justifying itself, really abandons its own proper end and standard, and adopts that of another system.

II. Does  
hedonism  
fulfil the  
requirements  
of a moral  
system?

§ 58. II. We have next to consider the system from a *moral point of view*; and see whether hedonism is able to supply what a theory of morals should supply, *viz.*, a *sufficient criterion to distinguish between right and wrong*, and a sufficient moral *motive* or ground of *obligation* to impel men to do what is right, and make them feel it to be their duty to do so. These are the essentials of a moral theory.

(i) The first question then is: does it sup-

ply an adequate means of distinguishing right and wrong in action, *i.e.*, a sufficient *standard* of moral conduct? The standard by which altruistic hedonism proposes to judge the rightness and wrongness of actions is their bearing on the pleasure and pain of others. But are there not many forms of wrong in which no appreciable pain is inflicted on others? Are there not many cases in which injury and injustice to one person might be made the means of pleasure to many others? Would not the majority be left free always to promote their own profit and pleasure by oppressing and plundering the minority? Indeed it is evident that the hedonist principle might be used to cover many cases of dishonesty, injustice and crime. We must conclude, therefore, that it does not supply a sufficient ground of distinction between right and wrong.

(i) It does not enable us to distinguish between right and wrong.

And yet the school of Bentham and Mill has been a leading agency in favour of justice, philanthropy and reform. How is this contradiction to be accounted for? In this way, that along with their conception of pleasure as the motive-force, they have had a strong sense of justice as the rule of conduct, *viz.*, in the sense of *equity* or *fair-play* in the distribution of the means of pleasure; and have thus really borrowed their conception of justice from another school without being conscious of doing so. This has been most fully recognised by Sidgwick, who in his "*Methods of Ethics*" endeavours to show that the ultimate good and end is happiness; but that this hedonistic idea of the end is combined always with an intuitive perception of fairness or equity in the distribution of the means of happiness, in proportion to men's rights and merits. He thus combines with the hedonistic theory of the end, an intuitive theory of the judgment.

Hedonists have always been tacitly assuming a higher standard than pleasure.

As admitted by Sidgwick.

(ii) And, again, does it supply a sufficient

(ii) It does not supply a sufficient ground of obligation and duty.

*moral motive and ground of obligation?* If pleasure be the end of life, we cannot be expected to sacrifice our own pleasure to that of others, without having a sufficient motive for so doing. But what motive can hedonism hold out for the sacrifice of pleasure, which is not itself pleasure? And even if we allow that causing pleasure to others gives pleasure to ourselves, still it can never be so strong a pleasure as that which we have sacrificed in order to cause it. For our own enjoyment of a thing must always be stronger than our feeling of another person's enjoyment—the only pleasure that is really pleasure to us, the egoists admitted, is our own pleasure.

Attempts of hedonists to account for obligation.

How then are we to account for moral motive, obligation, and duty from the hedonistic point of view? Hedonists, we have found, give two grounds of obligation :—

(1) Force of sympathy with pleasures and pains of others.

(1) The first is the force of *sympathy* and *fellow-feeling*, which necessarily develop in all members of the social organism, as the social organism itself develops. But still, if pleasure and pain be the standard, a person's feeling of another person's pain or pleasure can hardly ever be so strong as his feeling of his own. And if a person's actions were always determined by the strongest pleasure, it is doubtful if his feeling of the pleasure and pain of others would ever be strong enough to make him sacrifice his own pleasure to that of others. At least, it would not lead him to make any important sacrifice—it would never make a martyr nor a hero of him. It would not give the soldier such a feeling of duty as makes him risk his life for the greater happiness of his countrymen; nor even deter the cashier

But this always outweighed by one's own pleasures and pains.

from defrauding his employers; nor the servant from petty thefts which might cause little loss or pain to his master.

Hence the force of sympathy, the hedonistic conscience, is not sufficient of itself to create a bond of obligation sufficiently strong for the wants of ordinary morality.

Utilitarians appeal further, indeed, to the binding force of the mass of altruistic tendencies which have been accumulated in the course of ages, and strengthened by the experiences of our own life-time. Transference of interest in our own life-time together with the associative connections inherited from our ancestors have made the disinterested tendencies so strong, they say, that we find greater satisfaction in being just, honest, benevolent, than in being otherwise. Still, on the other hand, there is this fatal objection: when men are told that the only end of these virtuous tendencies is the promotion of happiness, and find that in some cases happiness may be attained by the violation of them, then these altruistic virtues will lose all their binding power over the mind. In short, feeling thus developed out of egoism could never be truly altruistic, but only ego-altruistic at most.

Force of tendencies acquired by transference of interest and habit.

But these may be found to be illusions.

(2) Now hedonists themselves have felt this, and appealed to another force to supplement that of sympathy in creating obligation, *viz.*, the force of sanctions, or rewards and punishments—including the social sanctions, or the approval and disapproval of society with all their practical consequences; the political sanctions, or penalties of the law; and the theological sanctions, or rewards and punishments of the future life.

(2) The force of anticipated rewards and punishments.

But the sanctions are an appeal to self-interest; so that in appealing to them, hedonists are falling back from the altruistic to the egoistic and non-

But this is equivalent to abandon-

ing altruism,  
and falling  
back on  
egoism.

moral form of the system, which they professed to have risen above, and which deprives conduct of everything that can be called moral quality, making the only standard to be selfishness.

Hence hedonism must either fall back on egoism, giving up all claim to be a truly moral theory, or move forward to perfectionist idealism.

(iii) And finally it does not give a true account of the ultimate good.

(iii) And finally, are we warranted in considering pleasure to be *the ultimate end and good of human nature*? We must distinguish between two kinds of good: (1) a good which consists in the outward circumstances in the midst of which the self is placed, *viz.*, in these circumstances being such as to produce agreeable sensations in the self; and (2) a good which consists of something in the inner nature and constitution of the ego itself, some essential perfection of its own nature. Which, then, of these two kinds of good is the higher? In which of them does the moral good consist? We cannot fail to see that it must consist in that inner and fundamental kind of good which lies in the essential nature of the ego itself.

Which must lie in the essential nature of the conscious being.

After all, therefore, the greatest objection to the hedonist principle consists in this: that pleasure and pain depend on conditions external to the self, and have nothing to do with the essential nature of the person, but leave it wholly unaffected. The enjoyment of pleasure belongs to the animal part of human nature; and animals and men of the grossest nature may enjoy as great a quantity of pleasure as the highest; and, if we distinguish quality from quantity, we are introducing another standard of value distinct from that of pleasure itself.

It is safe to say, therefore, that the moral quality

of conduct must consist in something that expresses the inner and essential nature of the self; and that the highest good of a rational being must consist in some excellence of his essential nature, and not in the outward circumstances in the midst of which he is placed, which are the conditions only of pleasure and pain.

We must, therefore, seek for some higher good and standard than pleasure.

### XIX. The Perfect Self as Standard—Idealism.

§ 59. It is obvious, then, that if we are to seek the ultimate standard of moral judgment in the idea of an ultimate end and good, we must find it in some other kind of good than pleasure.

Now, the above considerations will enable us to determine from beforehand, what the main characteristics of the ultimate good must be. In the first place they enable us to characterize it *negatively*.—

(1) The good cannot consist in *law* or *conformity* to law merely, because law itself can be good and right only in so far as the conduct which it enjoins is conducive to an *end which is good*. Law itself and conformity to law, therefore, have reference to, and suppose an end beyond themselves.

(2) It cannot be anything in the *form* merely of particular actions, considered as good in itself, because action has no real meaning apart from the concrete results to which it leads; while its immediate and temporary results, again, are subordinate in importance to its final, ultimate and permanent ones. In other words, action cannot be good in itself, but only as a means to an end, as a condition of something beyond itself.

If we conclude that the ultimate moral standard must be the highest good, we must determine in what the highest good consists.

It does not consist in law for its own sake.

Nor in form for its own sake.

Nor in pleasure for its own sake.

(3) It cannot consist in external circumstances, nor in pleasure which depends on external circumstances; because these, even the pleasure itself, are external to the essential nature of the person, and leave it unaffected. A person may be made to enjoy pleasure or suffer pain without its making any difference to his essential nature as a person. But no good can be ultimate which leaves the nature of the person out of account. It is not enough that man should be happy. He should, as Kant says, deserve happiness. Without that, happiness is meaningless; and it is on this account largely that hedonism fails to satisfy reason.

Nor in self-abnegation for its own sake.

(4) And it can not be a merely negative state of self-conquest, in the sense of self-abnegation, or self-sacrifice. Some, indeed, have taught that the highest good of the self consists in self-renunciation—in repressing all individual desires, and sinking all the interests of the self as an individual; and making one's self indifferent not only to pleasure and pain alike, but to all the satisfactions and perfections that are characteristic of the individual as such; and merging the individuality of one's self in the universal—reducing it to be a means for carrying out the law of the universal, without asserting itself as an end in itself, or having any rights or interests of its own.

Something like this is assumed in the Cynic, Stoic, Buddhist and Pessimistic systems. But virtue does not consist in suppressing desires, but in shaping one's desires in conformity with a highest good. And the universal apart from individuals is an abstraction equivalent to nothing; so that self-abnegation would be equivalent to self-annihilation (as seems admitted in the Buddhist nirvana). But good cannot thus consist in a blank negation of

being; it must consist in something positive, and involve a perfecting, not an abolishing of the individuality of the person.

§ 60. But the above merely negative characteristics help us to proceed further, and determine *a priori* certain positive characteristics of the Highest Good:—

Its positive characteristics.

(1) We can understand that it must be an end; or something which has to be striven for and attained through free rationally regulated effort. This is equivalent to saying that the highest good of the rational being must be a good which can be attained by the free voluntary activity of the self. If it were not so—if the good in question were not brought about by the self's own effort, but were added on by some other power—then it would not really belong to the self, but to that other power.

(1) It must be an end which can be attained by self-directed effort.

(2) And that this end which is ultimately good, or good in itself and not merely as a means to an end, must consist of something in the essential nature of the person as a person, and must be attained by the realization in the person of the highest perfection of which human nature is possible, viz., a perfection of nature which does not depend on outward circumstances as pleasure does, but on which outward circumstances and feelings are themselves ultimately dependent.

(2) It must lie in the essential nature of the self.

For the rational mind is not a purely passive product made to be what it is, and feel what it feels, by external circumstances. It is essentially an active, creative principle, which makes its own circumstances, and thereby its own feelings. Therefore it is only in its essential nature as an active,

Reasons for this.

The self, a principle of activity susceptible of being developed and perfected.



creative, self-determining principle that its highest perfection can be realized.

But only self-attained perfection can be said truly to belong to the self.

And it does not exist as an object ready-made and complete once for all (there is nothing complete in this sense except lifeless things); but as a potentiality which has to develop and realize what is latent in it, and to become in *reality* what it is potentially. And this realization of what it may and should be cannot be accomplished by any force acting upon it externally (as passive products such as a watch, a steam-engine, a ship, are constructed), but only by effort of itself from within. The perfecting of the self is therefore, from the nature of the case, *self-realization*.

Hence the good said to consist in self-realization

In other words, the perfecting of the self as a self (*a*) can be accomplished only by the *self's* own self-directed effort (otherwise the perfection attained would not belong to the self, but to that which confers the perfection, for we really *are* only what we make ourselves to be); and (*b*) is equivalent to making the self more *real*, because perfection and *reality* are ultimately the same thing. Absolute reality is perfection itself.

A lifeless object such as a grain of sand or particle of carbon may be said to be already complete and perfect of its own kind, and incapable of further development; and a passive product such as a watch, steam-engine or ship is made to be what it is wholly by forces acting from without. But mind is by its nature a principle of development, whose existence is a struggle towards higher development and greater perfection; and it is in this struggle that the moral life consists. For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man take in exchange for his soul? What good can there be in the world to one who

loses the opportunity of completing and perfecting his own nature, which can be accomplished only by action of himself upon himself?

(3) But we can see also that the mental good which is to be the end and standard of conduct, cannot be a good of an isolated individual here or there, but must be a *common* good,—a good of all minds in common, or of the common mental nature which is in all individuals collectively. The reason for this is partly, because it is the duty and privilege of all minds alike to perfect their own nature; but especially, because the highest perfection of mind is something which cannot be realized in or by any individual separately, but only through the co-operation and interaction of many individuals, and therefore in and through the medium of a society of minds working reciprocally as organs of a social organism.

(3) But realization of mind can be attained only in communion of minds.

And the reason for this, again, is that a mind is not an isolated atom which can exist by itself like a grain of sand, or attain its development in isolation, and out of relation to other minds. An isolated mind would never develop into rational mind at all. Development of mind is rendered possible by the co-operation of many minds. Every mind derives its mental life *from*, and shares it *with* other minds. Organization, and physical environment are conditions, indeed, of the development of mind, but they would not of themselves make mind. Mind as such, with its endowments *con*ate as well as acquired, is a product of the social environment—the common mental medium in which it lives and moves and has its being, and from which it derives the material and nutriment, so to speak, of its mental life, as much as the plant-germ derives its materials from earth and air. Indeed the individual mind has no more existence as mind apart from the community of minds, or mental medium in which it has developed,

Reason for this.

Individual minds share in a common mental life.

And have no isolated existence.

than the community has existence apart from the individuals contained in it.

Hence results the community of minds—reciprocity of individual and common good essential to self-realization.

Rational egoism and altruism ultimately identical.

§ 61. We must conclude, therefore, that the ultimate good is not only an accessible good, and a self-realizable good, but also a common good; and that the individual can attain his own good only in and through, along with and by means of, the good of others; so that in promoting the good of others he is promoting his own good. The individual does not, in promoting the good of human nature in general, sink or sacrifice his own individuality, but rather perfects it. Perfect individuality is thus to be realized only in a community of minds, as the perfection of a bodily organ is possible only through that of the organism and the organic life as a whole. In this ultimate identity of the individual and the universal, therefore, the old antagonism of egoism and altruism vanishes. There is no *real* good of self which is not at the same time a good of others, and no good of others which is not reflected back upon the self. "The impulse of self-preservation, which in its higher forms is self-perfection and self-realization, is the ultimate spring of all virtue, and it is when one seeks most his own good that he contributes most to the good of others in turn" (Spinoza). And there is no such thing as absolute altruism, any more than absolute egoism. Even in self-sacrifice there is an egoistic element. The hero or martyr, while sacrificing his body, is preserving or realizing his ideal self.

The community and real.

This principle of the community of minds and of mental good has been fully recognised by the later evolutionary hedonism, *viz.*, in its principle of the

social organism. But it was wanting to the older systems, both hedonist and intuitionist. These rather regarded every individual mind as an independent entity capable of subsisting and developing by itself apart from any community of minds, and having natural rights inherent in itself apart from any reciprocity with other minds; and therefore regarded society as resulting from a contract or convention. But, in reality, mind can be mind only in reciprocity with other minds; and rights and duties can arise only in the correlation of minds with minds in a social organism. Morality is therefore a social thing, and we must look for its standard in a social and common good.

reciprocity of the good not recognised by the older hedonists and intuitionists, who accepted the contract theory of society.

And further, these older systems were accustomed to separate the good into two rival camps (so to speak, *viz.*, the good of self and the good of others, egoistic and altruistic good. And these were supposed to be inconsistent with each other, so that in seeking the one, we must sacrifice the other. Egoism said that each must seek his own good to the disregard of that of others; altruism, that we must seek the good of others to the sacrifice of our own. Stoicism, again, required the individual to sacrifice personal goods altogether, and identify himself with impersonal law.

And regarded the good of self and that of others as opposed and exclusive.

But the true moral theory, on the contrary, shows that the good of the individual and the general good are reciprocal and relative to each other; so that the individual, in order to promote his own good in the highest sense, must aim not at his own personal good so much as at the common good. To seek life alone in isolation and selfishness is to lose life; to forget one's own life

But higher and lower goods are really reciprocal.

in promotion of the common good is to find life.

And the ideal good which is the ultimate end and standard of conduct will be like a system of concentric circles, one within another, like circles in water widening from the centre outwards—each narrower ideal widening into a more comprehensive one, and the wider one returning upon the narrower. For there will be—

(1) The individual's own good, the ground of his duties towards himself. (2) The good of his family and friends, with his duties towards them. (3) The good of the community in which he lives, his city or nation with its corresponding set of duties. (4) The good of humanity or of all mankind collectively. (5) The good of all sentient or rational beings in the universe, duties towards whom may be summed up in one word as duty towards God, who is the life-giving and unifying principle of the whole. Thus ethics finally rises into religion, or duty towards God, which includes all other duties within it. And the outermost circles flow back (so to speak) upon the innermost—the promotion of the wider good promotes the narrower also. Thus the first and lowest community is the family; but families differentiate into tribes; and tribes integrate themselves into nations. And thus love of family widens into love of country; and that into love of humanity, and of God.

Summary of  
the idealist  
theory.

We may conclude, therefore, that the highest good consists in the perfection of the self as a free rational being; and that this good, in order to be a moral and truly spiritual good, must be attained through *self-realization* of the potentialities latent in the self; and that this is a good which can be attained only by the co-operation of all rational beings acting together in mutual correlation, like the organs of an organism, so that the individual can attain his own highest good only in and through that of his fellow-beings. And the spring and impelling force underlying the development of mental

life, is not a life and death struggle for existence between different mental beings, as most evolutionists have assumed, but a struggle for higher and more perfect existence, which can be attained only by harmony and community of mental beings.

§ 62. But then the question comes to be: In what does this perfection consist which the self is to realize in itself? What are the potentialities of perfection that are latent in the nature of the self? This question, however, from the nature of the case admits of only a proximate answer, because only a perfect being could give an adequate definition of perfection. But it is an object of incessant striving and partial attainment; and reason recognises it intuitively wherever it is attained. And from recognising what has been attained, it can by reflection fill in an outline of what remains to be attained—can anticipate the lines of future development, and thus construct a standard, which though not absolute nor ultimate, is yet sufficient for the guidance of conduct.

The fact that the conception of goodness and standard of conduct has varied from age to age—that moral judgments have differed so much at different times and places—may be a difficulty to the intuitional theory of a universal and unerring innate moral sense; but it does not prove, as some have argued, that there is no absolute and universal good, but only the self-interest of individuals. It proves only that the human mind, with its power of grasping and conceiving what is good, has undergone development, so that men have been attaining gradually, by intellectual development, a clearer and

Difficulty of the idealist theory.

How is the highest perfection of self to be known, defined, and applied?

For the idea of the good has varied extremely from age to age.

[more adequate conception of the good, and that intellectual has been accompanied by moral progress.

It has been defined as a perfect will.

But in what does perfection of will consist?

We can go thus far, however, towards a definition of the good.—Life consists in activity; and that of a rational being, in free self-directed activity, *i.e.*, the exercise of volition; and the function of the intellectual and rational powers consists in this, that they make such self-directed activity—such self-realization—possible. Hence what is essentially good or bad in the nature of the self must manifest itself in conduct, *i.e.*, in the free exercise of will. Hence it may be said that the highest perfection of the self consists in perfection of will. “There is nothing without qualification good in heaven or on earth except a good will” (Kant). “The supreme good consists in the possession of all the perfections whose acquisition depends upon our own free will” (Descartes).

Still this perfection of self or of will remains, it must be admitted, a vague idea, which the theory has no means of filling up, and making concrete.

The theory may be accused of involving the circle in definition.

And this theory of the end may seem at first sight to involve a vicious circle. Good action is action tending towards the realization of a perfect self; and perfection of self consists in the tendency to good action. And again: the highest good consists in a good will; and a good will consists in willing what is good (indicating that the good will is only a means to a higher good). The fallacy, however, is more apparent than real. The ultimate end is a disposition permanently and essentially good. Particular good actions do not imply a disposition radically good, but they tend by accumulation to make the disposition good. Thus they not only manifest the goodness of the self, but they tend to make it good.

§ 63. The above, then, may be accepted as a

statement in the abstract, of the highest good of human nature—that it consists in realization, by voluntary effort of the self, of all the potentialities of excellence latent in the self—in self-realization.

Yet, when we proceed to consider how this highest good is to be applied as a standard for ordinary moral judgments, difficulties present themselves. Will, and therefore the inner nature of the self with its perfection or imperfection, manifests itself in particular actions. It is therefore only the particular actions that we can know and judge directly—the nature of the self only indirectly, as being manifested in them.

Does then the supposed ideal of the perfect self supply us with an adequate standard by which to judge particular actions? In order to its use as a standard it would be necessary—

(1) That we should have ready before our minds a clear and adequate idea of the perfect self;

(2) That we should be able to determine by deduction from this idea what classes of actions, and what rules of action are consistent with such perfection, or conducive to its attainment;

(3) And that we should be able to judge every individual action that presents itself, by bringing it under one or other of those rules of action which are deducible from the highest ideal.

But then the following objections present themselves—

(i) In judging the rightness and wrongness of particular actions, we do not find ourselves performing any such complicate deductive process as this; the ordinary act of moral judgment is rather an act of simple intuitive perception.

Hence the difficulty of applying the ideal self as a standard of moral judgment.

To do so would imply a clear idea of the perfect self, and a complicate process of deduction from the idea to the goodness of particular actions.



But such an ideal is a product of philosophy

(ii) We do not find in our minds any such adequate and ready-made idea of the perfect self as would be required, and is assumed in the theory. The idea is rather one which has to be worked out by reflection and philosophical deduction, and can only be approximated to through the experience and thought of successive ages.

Whereas moral judgment is simple and intuitive ; and such judgment is necessary to the forming of the ideal itself.

This is equivalent to saying that the ideal theory does not by itself give the explanation which we require, of particular moral judgments. These are not complicate deductions, but simple intuitions. And, indeed, it would be impossible to form any ideal conception of what is essentially good in the nature of mind, if we had not a power of first judging what is good and bad in the particular actions in which the nature of mind is manifested. We must be able to judge what is good in particular actions by themselves, before we can form any idea of what is good in the nature of the agent.

Nevertheless the ideal theory is true, and supplies a philosophical explanation of the moral life

What then, we may ask, is the use and significance of the ideal theory ? We answer : It supplies a true statement *in the abstract*, of the highest good of rational beings. But it is *only* an abstract and formal statement, which requires to be filled up, and transformed into a concrete definition. And the defining of the perfect self is essentially a problem for philosophical analysis and deduction—one to which even an approximate answer can be attained only by such metaphysical analysis of rational life as was attempted by Kant in his "*Critique of Practical Reason*," and such deduction from a philosophical conception of rational mind and its place and function in the world-system, as was attempted by Aristotle in his "*Metaphysic*," by

Spinoza in his "*Ethica*," and recently by T. H. Green in his "*Prolegomena to Ethics*."

And the use of such a philosophical ideal is that it explains the meaning and purpose of life, and the *reason* why certain actions are good and others bad—*viz.*, that they are consistent with, and conducive to the highest perfection, and therefore the highest good of self-conscious beings.

But there must be some simpler means of judging the rightness and wrongness of particular actions—some standard, which will be consistent with, and auxiliary to the highest good, but more distinct and definable; and which will be accessible without any abstruse process of philosophical deduction such as the idealist theory supposes.

But supposes  
a simpler  
form of  
moral judg-  
ment with a  
simpler  
standard.

Of the many attempts which have been made to construct an ideal of personal perfection which might be held up as a standard to be aspired to, we may distinguish three types—the Greek, the Hindu and the Christian.

Different  
ideals of the  
perfect self.

(a) The Greeks generally thought of the perfect man as one thoroughly fitted for all the duties and enjoyments of the present life on earth; and formed therefore what may be called a naturalistic conception of the perfect life, in which most importance was attached to physical and intellectual attributes—moral excellence being virtually identified with knowledge.

Greek.

(b) The Hindus also thought of personal perfection as fitness for life on this physical world, but thought of worldly existence as prolonged through successive terms of life—sinking lower or rising higher in dignity according to the moral merit of the person. The Hindu and Buddhist conception, therefore, went beyond the popular Greek one (though not beyond certain Greek sects such as the Stoics) in giving greater distinctness and emphasis to the moral element.

Hindu

(c) The Christian conception, again, regards the

Christian.

present worldly life as only an antecedent stage of moral development (regarded as essentially self-development or self-realization), and as preparatory to a higher, more purely spiritual form of existence in closer communion with absolute spirit, prolonged through eternity, and therefore independent of earthly circumstances.

Thus the Greek regarded the present life as capable of being perfected; the Hindu regarded existence as at present comparatively evil, but as capable of being approximately perfected by a series of terrestrial lives; the Christian regards the present life as only a transitory stage preparatory to a higher.

Conclusions arrived at.

**XX. Harmony as Standard—Intuition.**

§ 64. We arrive, therefore, at the following conclusions. External command or law cannot make an action to be morally right or wrong; it must be right by its own

Moral rightness does not consist ultimately in conformity to law, nor in conduciveness to pleasure, though these qualities may be right in their place

nature before it can be binding as law. Conduciveness to *pleasure* cannot be accepted as the standard of rightness, because actions may be conducive to pleasure, and at the same time wrong in themselves. The principle of *self-realization* may be accepted as supplying a correct expression of the highest good of human nature; but we find that the idea of the perfect self is too vague and remote to serve as a standard for ordinary moral judgments, and that such an idea cannot be arrived at even approximately without employing, in the process, another more distinct and accessible standard of judgment. Such a standard we find in the conception of rightness as *a quality seen to be inherent in the form of an action*, when the circumstances of the agent, and the intended means and results of the action are taken into consideration.

And actions cannot be known to be in conformity with the ideal self unless first known to be right in themselves

We are thus brought at last to what may be

called the *intuitional* or *formal* account of moral quality and standard. In other words, we conclude (1) that rightness is a special kind of quality *inherent in the form and nature of every action*, independently of its being commanded or forbidden by any one, and independently of its bearing on the pleasure of any one; (2) that this intrinsic quality of rightness can be discerned *intuitively* by considering the action in relation to its immediate circumstances—the relations of the agent to other persons before and after the action, in so far as affected by the intention of the agent; (3) that the standard is the general idea which we form and carry about in our minds, of what we have perceived to be intrinsically right in particular actions, and with which we compare every new action to see whether it agrees with the general idea of rightness; and (4) that the judgment is the act of intuitively perceiving in the action the same quality which we have already present before our minds as standard. For "actions have a nature, that is, some character certainly belongs to them, and somewhat there is that may be truly affirmed of them. *Right* and *wrong* denote what actions *are*. Now whatever anything is, that it is not by will, or decree, or power, but by natural necessity" (Price).

But the meaning of this system will evidently depend on what we mean by the *form* or *nature* of an action. By its *form* is meant that which distinguishes one action from another; and this difference, again, consists in the results or effects which the agent *intends* his action to bring about, considered in connection with the circumstances under which the agent acts. And these intended results may be

Hence the intuitional view.

Rightness, a quality inherent in the nature of an action.

Discernible intuitively.

And the working standard is the general idea of such formal rightness.

And by the form or nature of an action is meant the change of relations which it intentionally produces.

The rightness and wrongness of actions must therefore lie in these changes of relation.

conveniently described as a change of relation between the person who acts, and the things which are the objects of his action, and the persons affected by it. This may be understood in the following way.—The agent, before the action, stands in a certain set of relations to other persons and things; and the effect of the action is that it changes this set of relations. And in fact, people living in society are living in a moving equilibrium of relations to each other, which are being continually adjusted, interrupted, and readjusted, not only by natural events, but by every action of every individual.

Now the *form* or *nature* of the action consists in this change of relation which it brings about, and it is in this form of the action, or intended change of relation, that the quality of rightness or wrongness resides.

Is it possible then to define, or at least describe the quality of rightness?

§ 65. How then are we to *define* or *describe* this quality of rightness or wrongness which we perceive to be inherent in the form of the action? We can understand that in these changing sets of relations there is something which can be called *fitness* or *unfitness*, *congruity* or *incongruity*, *proportion* or *disproportion*, *harmony* or *discord*; and that every new act tends either to restore some fitness and harmony of relation which is being lost, or to destroy some one which has hitherto prevailed.

Rightness and wrongness of action may be described as harmony and discord

Thus right conduct may be understood as conduct which readjusts and promotes fitness of relation between a person and other persons, and tends to keep up the harmony of relations in which social life consists; and wrong conduct, as what breaks the true harmony of relations and introduces

something discordant, unfit, and out of keeping. The rightness or wrongness of an action will consist, therefore, in the congruity or incongruity of the action's intended results with this harmony of relations. When they have this quality of fitness, keeping, congruity or harmony with each other, then the action is right. When they involve an element of unfitness, incongruity or discord, then the action is wrong. The moral standard is *the general idea which we form of fitness and harmony of relations as determined by voluntary actions*; and moral judgment consists in discerning this fitness or unfitness of relations, which can be done by merely contemplating the circumstances and terms of the relations, and therefore without the help of inference. The duty of every rational being consists in his being bound as a rational being to keep up this fitness or congruity of relation. And the whole duty of man may be summed up in the maxim of Kant: "Act in such a way that the rule according to which you act may be accepted as a rule of action by all rational beings," *i.e.*, would keep up the harmony of relations which makes social life possible and desirable.

The full meaning of this harmony of relations, and the reason why it should be considered to be the essence of moral rightness, may be better understood from the following considerations.—Voluntary action consists in intentionally producing certain results, and these results consist in certain changes in our own circumstances, and those of other persons affected by our action. We may express this by saying that voluntary action consists in intentionally producing changes of relation among people living together in society.

Now society may be compared to an organism. In the organism every cell, fibre, and organ stands in a definite relation to every other. Every cell has

of the new relations produced by the action.

The meaning of such harmony and discord is better understood when we consider that the very existence of bodily, mental and social life depends on harmony of relations.

The bodily  
organism.

its own special function to perform in relation to other cells, and to the organ of which it forms part ; and every organ, in relation to other organs, and to the organism as a whole. And the life and health of the whole depends on a certain harmony of relations being maintained among all the cells and organs—the forms and degrees of the work performed by them.

The social  
organism.

Similarly, every person living in society is the centre of a complicate system of relations to other persons, and is what he is in virtue of these relations. Thus parent and child, master and servant, teacher and pupil, ruler and subject, physician, lawyer, tradesman, millionaire and beggar, have their relations to each other and to society as a whole ; and thus human society, like an organism, is a moving equilibrium of relations, and this equilibrium is changed, and thereby adjusted, deranged, or re-adjusted, by every action of every individual. We can understand, therefore, that it is this adjusting or deranging of relations, this producing of harmony or discord, that makes actions to be right or wrong.

The life of  
both consists  
in harmony  
of processes  
and results.

And indeed this conclusion, that moral rightness consists in harmony of relations, is only what we should expect when we consider the place and meaning of harmony in the general economy of living beings (not to speak of its place in the physical system of the universe). For—

(1) The life itself of the individual is a harmony of relations. The organism is a system of cells, fibres, and more complex organs, of which every one has its own special function and duty ; and the unity and life of the whole depends on the proportion and harmony with which the cells, fibres and organs work together, according to their special functions, and in their due proportions. When one cell or organ works for its own enlargement alone, or ceases to promote the working of the rest, then disease and death ensue.

(2) The collective life of society also consists in a harmony of relations. Society is made up of individuals and classes. Every individual has his

function in relation to others (as every cell in the physical organism), and is the centre of a system of relations, and every action of every individual consists in either disturbing or readjusting the equilibrium of relations by which society lives.

In this way we can understand, why it is in the maintenance of this harmony of changing relations that the rightness of conduct consists.

§ 66. We can understand, then, that the health and well-being of society will depend on the maintenance, by continual readjustment, of the harmony of relations among its constituent individuals; and that the excellence of the individual will consist in the harmony of his character and actions with the health and healthy development of the social organism; and that the moral quality of his actions will consist, therefore, in their congruity with the system as a whole; and that this congruity of relations can be *perceived intuitively* on considering the terms between which the relations exist. This, then, is the *intuitional* explanation of the moral standard and judgment.

Hence the conclusion which follows as to the nature of moral rightness.

But that the relations on which the rightness of conduct depends are extremely complex, is obvious when we consider that they fall into the following three groups—

And as to the complexity of moral judgment.

(a) The relations in which the agent stands to other persons, and in which other persons stood to each other, *before the action*;

Including simple

(b) The relations in which the agent stands to other persons, and the relations in which other persons stand to each other, *after the action*, in so far as affected by the action, for the effects of the action go on spreading and deepening to the end of the world;



And compound relations.

(c) And the relations, again, between these *two sets of relations*, i.e., between the relations prevailing between the agent and other persons before the action, and those prevailing after the action.

These sets of relations, it is clear, will differ for every agent, and change with every action; and the life of society will consist in the continually changing equilibrium resulting from the harmonious reciprocal activities of its constituent factors.

And as to how differences of moral judgment arise.

But if the rightness and wrongness of actions depend on such a complexity of circumstances, extending even into the unknown future, how, it may be asked, can moral judgment be *simple* and *intuitive*? The answer is, that in most cases the moral quality of an action is sufficiently obvious on consideration of its immediate circumstances and relations—the agent and the circumstances under which he acts, and the proximate results which he intentionally produces. For, in the majority of cases, the remote and unknown results will be good or bad—according as its proximate and intended results are such.

Still it must be admitted that the complexity of relations, on which the moral quality of an action depends, makes the judgment to be often complex and difficult, and leads to errors and differences of moral judgment. Uniformity of judgments supposes that the *same* terms are always present; and completeness of judgment supposes that *all* the terms are present. But in moral judgment the complexity of the terms is such that they may not all be present to the judging mind, which will lead to errors of judgment; and different terms may be present to different minds, which will lead to frequent differences of judgment.

It follows also that moral rightness is not

§ 67. We are thus led to the conclusion that moral quality is a relational quality, or one which consists in a certain harmony of relations between certain terms, and is discerned by that intelligence

power which discerns proportions and harmonies between things. It follows that moral judgment bears some analogy to æsthetic judgment, and moral quality to the beautiful, in so far as it consists in proportions and harmonies between parts. The essential difference between moral and æsthetic harmony arises from the difference of their terms. The beauty of a building consists in relations of shape and dimensions between its arches, pillars, and other parts; that of a landscape, in relations between hills and plains, woods, streams, clouds, shadows and colours; that of a piece of music, in sounds of certain tones and timbres. But the terms between which moral relations exist are minds with their needs, desires, hopes, fears, volitions, and the objects which they produce and use as the means of their preservation and well-being.

This account, therefore, assumes that moral quality is capable, if not of definition, at least of description and illustration by analogy with certain other qualities. And it assumes what may be called an *intellectual*, *rational*, or *dianoetic* view of the faculty of moral perception, assimilating that faculty to the general intellectual or rational power of discerning relations, proportions and harmonies.

Many moralists, however, have attempted to explain it as a quality absolutely *unique* and *sui generis* (of a kind by itself), which every one can perceive and feel for himself, but which bears no analogy to any other quality; and which no one, therefore, can define, nor even describe, nor communicate to any one else. But by insisting too much on the uniqueness of the quality in one respect, *viz.*, in respect of kind, they are obliged to sacrifice its uniqueness in another respect, *viz.*, in the manner in which it is received; and to assimilate moral perception to

the unique, indefinable, unaccountable thing which it is sometimes assumed to be.

Especially by those who explain the faculty of moral judgment as a sense.

sense-perception, and moral quality, therefore, to the sense-qualities of things; thus arriving at the moral sense theory of the judgment, which will be described under moral faculty.

### XXI. Relation between the Standards.

Granted that the above are legitimate standards of action, there must be some order of subordination among them.

§ 68. Thus the conceptions of Law, Pleasure, Perfection, and Harmony are all ethical standards according to which actions may be judged and regulated. The question is: which of them is the ultimate standard to which the others are to be subordinated as means to end? It will be found, however, that the idealist and intuitional standards—those of perfection and harmony—are, in the last analysis, identical, or at least coincident as being only different aspects of the same. For the harmony of action which constitutes the intuitional standard, is the means and condition of the perfect social life; which is, again, the means and condition of the perfect individual spiritual life which the ideal theory holds up as the ultimate good. The intuitional standard, therefore, may be regarded as merely a simpler and, for practical purposes, more convenient statement of the idealist one; or the idealist one as a philosophical explanation of the intuitional. Thus the standards will be found to be reducible to three. We have, however, to consider the relation of the standards more in detail.

(A) As for the *legal* standard—law in the common sense is distinguished by this, that it is imposed from without, and enforced by sanctions (punishments, and, in some cases, rewards). But these deprive mere obedience to law of any purely moral character. Hence the purpose for which laws

The legal standard is practically subordinate to the utilitarian.

imposed is not directly moral, but rather utilitarian. They are imposed as conditions of, and means towards order, peace, safety, and material prosperity, *viz.*, by making it to be for the self-interest of individuals to subordinate what would otherwise be their own interests to the good of others, in cases where the altruistic and moral motives are insufficient. Their motive, therefore, is expediency.

Thus we can see that the legal standard is subordinate to the hedonist one. The force of law consists in this that it attaches sanctions to certain rules of conduct, which make it to be for the self-interest of men to observe these rules. The rules, again, thus sanctioned are imposed as being expedient for the common interests of the community, the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

For law depends on sanctions for its motive-force.

Thus laws are really artifices for making it to be to the self-interest of individuals, to subordinate what would otherwise be their own self-interests, to the collective interests of the community.

And sanctions are artifices for reconciling the self-interests of individuals.

It does not follow, however, that they have no moral significance. They have a morally educative influence. They tend to produce habits of right-doing, and habits deepen into inclinations. And they emphasize the importance of right-doing, and stimulate the powers of moral intuition, until the purely utilitarian and egoistic motive for obedience comes to be supplemented, and perhaps superseded in many cases by a moral one.

•(B) As for the *hedonist* standard—if we recognise pleasure or happiness as a good, we have to consider its relation to that Good which we consider to be the ultimate one, and the highest standard. We can understand, of course, that the pursuit of the lower good will be right when, and in so far as it is consistent with or conducive to the higher

The utilitarian standard is subordinate to the moral.

good, which consists in essential personal worth; that the hedonist standard therefore is subordinate to the Moral, as the Legal is to the Hedonist.

And may be said to include really two standards—pleasure and happiness.

The question is complicated, indeed, by the distinction between *pleasure* and *happiness*. We have found pleasure to consist in the gratification of the senses and their wants; and therefore, though a state of consciousness, to be directly of physiological origin, and subject directly to physiological conditions. We have found that happiness, on the contrary, depends on the satisfaction of wants which do not rise directly out of the states of organism, but out of imperfections comprehended by thought and reason, and belonging therefore to the higher spiritual nature of man—the cravings of sympathetic feeling, and aspirations towards intellectual, æsthetic, and moral perfection.

But what is to be said as to the ultimate relation between moral worth and either pleasure or happiness?

But we have seen the deficiency of the theories which make either pleasure or happiness to be the Highest Good. How then are we to conceive the ultimate relation between them and the Highest Good? Are we to conclude that the Highest Good has nothing to do with pleasure or happiness, or that they are connected in some way?

There are two possible relations between them.

Kant, who insisted so strongly on the absolute independence of the moral ideal—on the principle that the rightness of action has no dependence on its quality of promoting happiness—assumed nevertheless that the Good would not be complete unless accompanied by happiness as its reward; and showed that there are two possible ways in which the ultimate Good and happiness may be connected—

(a) *Analytically*—the state of perfection

which we call the highest good may be such that happiness is implicitly *contained* in it, and rises out of it as a natural and necessary consequence.

This will be the case if happiness has its conditions within the mind itself—if the highest satisfaction must be self-satisfaction—and if, therefore, the highest happiness consist in the consciousness of fulfilling one's greatest needs, and accomplishing one's highest end, and thereby attaining one's highest perfection as a factor of the world-system.

This was the opinion of the ancient Stoics, who held that the good man may be happy even on the rack, *viz.*, in the consciousness of his own rectitude. It was also the view of Descartes: "The supreme good consists in the possession of all the perfections whose acquisition depends on our own free will; and felicity is the mental satisfaction which follows this acquisition." "Happiness," Spinoza said, "is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself," meaning the satisfaction which springs out of the consciousness of virtue. Or—

(b) *Synthetically*—it may be that the perfect state has no necessary tendency of its own to produce happiness, so that if it is to be accompanied by happiness, the happiness must be added on to it from without (synthetically) by some higher power. This compels us to assume an active moral power, above the world-system but operating in it, and designedly arranging the order of events in such a way that, though there is no necessary connection between virtue and happiness, yet the conditions which determine happiness shall ultimately be present where virtue is present. In this way, happiness, though it does not rise out of virtue analytically as its consequence, is added on to it synthetically as its sanction and reward.

They may be so essentially connected that happiness necessarily rises out of moral worth.

Or there may be no essential connection between them, so that if happiness is to be connected with moral worth, it must be added on to it artificially by God.

. This was the conclusion at which Kant himself arrived; and from this, as a corollary of his intuitionist system of morals, he sought to show that the being of God is a necessary postulate of morality, *viz.*, to insure the ultimate concomitance of happiness with moral perfection.

Later thinkers incline rather to the view of an essential (analytical) connection between virtue and happiness, so that the latter rises out of the former as its consequence; and this seems to be required by the idealist theory of the Good.

The idealist and intuitionist standards are only different sides of one moral standard.

(C) As for the *idealist* and *intuitionist* standards—we can see that these ultimately coincide, and are indeed but two aspects of the same; that harmony of conduct with circumstances, which reason discerns directly to be right and imperative, is the condition of that self-realization which reason discerns to be the highest end and Good of rational beings. Intuitive perception gives the facts, *viz.*, the rightness and wrongness of particular actions, and thereby a proximate and intuitive standard. Philosophical reflection gives the significance and reason of such rightness, by enabling us to comprehend such harmony of conduct as the condition of our realizing the highest Good and end of our being.

The remaining question with regard to Ethical Judgment is that of the faculty by which we judge.

## XXII. The Faculty of Moral Judgment.

§ 69. The moral judgment of actions supposes that we have before our minds a standard by which we judge. The moral standard is a general idea of what is good and right in action, and what it is our duty to do. The standard, therefore, supposes a power of mind by which we can discern the quality of rightness and obligatoriness, and the merit of doing what is right, and the guilt

of doing what is wrong ; and form a general idea, or standard, of what is right, obligatory, meritorious ; and discern the agreement or disagreement of every new action with this standard, as we discern a new building, picture, or poem to agree or disagree with the general idea which we already have of the beautiful in these arts.

This power has been spoken of as the *moral faculty*, *conscience*, or *moral sense*. What, then, is the nature of this faculty ? Is it a faculty of perception analogous to the faculties of *sense*, giving the difference between right and wrong somewhat as taste gives the difference between sweet and sour, and giving an *instinctive* tendency to prefer the one form of action to the other, without knowing why ; or, a capacity of emotion like *sympathy* making us feel the pains and pleasures of others, combined with the general intellectual power of drawing inferences from the pleasurable effects of our actions in the past to what their effects will be in the future ; or an application of the general *intellectual power* of discriminating relations and proportions with their harmonies and discords ?

Called conscience or moral sense.

The truth is that our view of the faculty which perceives and judges depends on our view of the quality which has to be perceived, and therefore on the standard of ethical goodness ; so that we may consider the different views of the faculty in relation to those already given of the standard. Hence :—

But accounts of the Faculty differ according to the standard assumed.

§ 70. I. As to the kind of faculty implied in the *legal* standard.—We may consider first, therefore, what kind of faculty will be required to discern the rightness or wrongness of actions when the

The Legal Standards require no



special  
Faculty of  
Judgment.

standard is external command or law, and the quality to be discerned consists simply in conformity or non-conformity with given law—the command of God, or the political law of the land, or the manners, customs and institutions of society.

In this case, supposing that the laws are given us, and we take for granted that they are right because they are given us, nothing is required for the judgment beyond the power of forming a general idea or understanding of the classes of actions commanded and forbidden by the law; and of discerning thereby the agreement or disagreement of every new action with the requirements of the law, in which its goodness or badness consists; and of picturing in imagination the rewards and punishments which will follow obedience and disobedience.

This standard, then, evidently does not require any special faculty for ethical judgment, but only ordinary experience, understanding, and imagination.

Does the  
Hedonist  
Standard  
then suppose  
a special  
Faculty of  
Judgment?

§ 71. II. We have next to consider what kind of faculty is implied in judging actions according to the *hedonistic* standard. If this standard be identical with the moral standard proper as hedonists think, then this faculty will be identical with moral faculty. In other words, if pleasure be the highest good, and rightness of conduct be its conduciveness to pleasure, then that power by which we discern, and judge preferable, those lines of action which are most conducive to pleasure, will be identical with moral faculty.

(A) Now, it is clear in the first place that the *egoistic* form, which makes the end and standard to

each man to be his own personal pleasure, will require no *special* faculty of moral judgment. It will suppose merely that we can learn from experience what things are conducive to our pleasure or pain ; and have power of drawing inferences from what has happened in the past to what will happen in the future ; and power of vividly conceiving, or picturing in thought, our own possible future happiness or misery, *viz.*, as a motive to work for obtaining the one and avoiding the other ; and power of forming, by means of inference and imagination, a more or less definite conception of the greatest happiness of our life as a whole, and of what actions will lead to it.

Egoistic Hedonism does not require any special faculty.

Hence this system will reduce morality to prudence at best, or enlightened self-love, with the power of judging and regulating action in such a way as to attain the greatest possible amount of pleasure on the whole. And the judgment of action as right or wrong will be only an inference from what has given us most pleasure or pain in the past to what will give us most pleasure or pain in the future

Only experience and ordinary powers of inference and representation.

But it must be maintained that prudence by itself is entirely distinct from morality ; and that this theory, therefore, is inconsistent with morality properly so-called. But though prudence is not itself the highest standard, nevertheless as judged and regulated according to a higher standard, prudence is generally a duty. It is our duty to use all possible precautions and means for the preservation and welfare of self, wherever these means are consistent with the preservation and welfare of others ; and the tendency to resist gratifications, which may prove detrimental to the welfare of self, is a virtue.

§ 72. (B) The *altruistic* or universalist form of hedonism, however, (assuming that the end and

But Altruistic Hedonism supposes a special Faculty and motive-force.

standard is happiness in general, including that of others as well as our own), will suppose another standard and motive-force, besides and partly opposed to self-love. It will suppose, indeed, the same power of inference and imagination to enable us to know beforehand that such and such actions will conduce to happiness, and power of picturing vividly the happiness or misery to which they will lead; so that the moral judgment will still be founded on inference from the past to the future consequences of actions. But something more will be needed, *viz.*, some capacity which will enable us to feel, and some motive-force which will prompt us to promote the happiness of others, and seek to relieve their pain as well as our own; in other words, an altruistic capacity and impulse, as opposed to the self-love or prudence of the previous system.

Namely, sympathy and other acquired feelings prompting to disinterested action.

This, we have already found, will be essentially a capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling, which will enable us to enter into the circumstances of others, and feel their pleasures and pains as if they were our own, prompting us to promote their happiness and alleviate their pains; while about this fundamental capacity of sympathy a mass of acquired capacities of feeling will accumulate by association and transference—prompting to veracity, honesty, and justice, as essential to the general well-being, even in cases where they do not affect directly our own pleasure and pain.

Supposing power of inference from past to future consequences of actions.

Hence according to this system the moral department of our nature will include—

(1) An intellectual element, *viz.*, a power of inference, by which we judge, from the data supplied by past experience, what will be conducive

to pleasure and pain in the future ; and—

(2) An emotional element, viz., a capacity of feeling, which will enable us to enter into and feel the pleasures and pains of others, and prompt us to promote the former and alleviate the latter, and will deter from injury and injustice—a capacity which will make us feel (even without reasoning) the ultimate identity of our own good with that of our fellow beings ; and will give us feelings of satisfaction and approval for all conduct conducive to the common well-being, and of horror and disgust for selfishness, injustice, and fraud, and thus supply a permanent mass of motive-forces impelling us towards justice and beneficence and away from their opposites (§ 53).

And we know that such a capacity of social feeling exists (1) because we are conscious of it in ourselves, and (2) because society and civilized life could not have originated nor continued without it.

And this utilitarian conscience is accounted for, we have found, either as a necessary product of the circumstances and experiences of each individual during his own life-time, as Mill thought ; or as a product of the accumulated experiences of the race preserved by inheritance, as Spencer says.

The above intellectual power and emotional capacity of conscience, then, will together constitute the moral faculty as understood by hedonists, leading us to approve of one kind of action, and disapprove of another, and feel bound to adopt the one and avoid the other. And this approval and disapproval will be based on inference as to what the consequences of the actions will be to the general happiness.

And a power of entering into, and feeling the feelings of others, and thereby the way in which others are affected by our actions.

Hence the moral conscience as understood by hedonists.

But there are many objections to this theory of conscience.

The objections to this as a *sufficient account of moral faculty* are involved in the objections to hedonism in general, and we need here repeat only the following, as being connected with the question of the faculty.—(1) The difficulty of accounting for such altruistic and disinterested feelings and impulses even with the aid of evolution—if we set out with the assumption that man naturally cares only for pleasure—seeing that the pleasure of self will naturally always take the first place. (2) The liability to disillusionment with regard to altruistic impulses—for even if such impulses and instincts could be produced in the ways described, and obeyed automatically for a time, yet when men come to understand how these tendencies are produced, they will regard them as illusions, and cease to be actuated by them, so that altruism will fall back into ego-altruism. (3) The hedonistic judgment would in innumerable cases lead to results opposed to the true moral judgment, *viz.*, cases in which fraud and injustice might be conducive to the pleasure of some, without causing any considerable pain to others—so that a strict following of the hedonistic rule, uncorrected by a higher one, would lead to moral anarchy (§ 58).

Is then the Intuitional account of conscience more satisfactory?

§ 73. III. We consider next the kind of faculty supposed in judging actions according to the *intuitive* standard, or standard of rightness considered as a quality inherent in the form and nature of the actions, and such as may be discerned by contemplating the actions in connection with their circumstances, without any thought of their being commanded or forbidden, or any inference to remote results. The faculty here supposed, therefore, is a faculty of *intuition*, or immediate knowledge. What then is the nature of this faculty of intuitive moral cognition?

We are confronted here with an important difference among intuitional moralists themselves

as to the nature of the moral quality of rightness,, and therefore of the faculty by which it is perceived—a difference which has caused them to be divided into two schools, called the *moral sense school* and the *intellectual, or rational school*.

(A) Thus one class of intuitionist moralists have regarded moral quality as essentially different in kind from every other quality, and therefore *simple, unique and unanalysable*—such as every one can feel and perceive for himself, but no one can define or even describe—and inherent in the nature of action as greenness is inherent in the leaf, or light in the sun.

Hence, as other simple and ultimate qualities, such as colour, taste, smell, require special faculties of *sensibility* and perception to make them known, so moral quality, as special and unique, will require a special form of *sensibility* for its perception, such as will make us *sensible* of the qualities of conduct, in a way analogous to that by which the physical senses make us sensible of the qualities of physical things.

How, then, do the *sense-faculties* operate in discerning the qualities of external things in the process of external perception?

In this way: the different qualities of things occasion different kinds of *passive affection or feeling* in us which we call sensations, and from the feelings thus produced in us we know that they have the qualities which occasion these feelings in us—as when we judge the leaf to be green or yellow, the fruit to be sweet or sour—though we can know the qualities only through and in terms of the feelings which they give us, *i.e.*, only representatively and

Two different accounts given by intuitionists.

Some assimilate moral judgment to sense-perception, and give what has been called the Moral Sense theory of conscience.

But what is implied in this? What is the nature of sense-perception?

We perceive external things through the medium of, and in terms of sensations.

symbolically. Thus the feeling or sensation precedes, and gives rise to the perceptual judgment.

What then will be the nature of moral perception according to this analogy?

We shall perceive moral quality through, and in terms of the feeling which it produces in us.

We apply this analogy now to moral judgment. When we picture the actions in our minds, the special kind of quality which we call moral will give rise to a *special kind of feeling* in us. From this we know that the action has a *special kind of quality* corresponding to this special kind of feeling which it occasions in us, and call it *moral quality*. Thus the feeling will precede, and be the ground of the judgment. And thus moral faculty will be a kind of "superior sense," or capacity of being passively affected by a certain class of qualities, and its perceptions will have some analogy to sense-perceptions; and for this reason this view has been called the *moral sense* theory.

What then shall we know of moral quality? We shall know it only as something which causes in us a certain kind of sensation or feeling—agreeable in the case of rightness, disagreeable in the case of wrongness.

§ 74. What then is the nature of this moral quality discerned by moral sense? The answer given is that, being simple and unanalysable, rightness cannot be defined any more than colour or taste, though every one discerns it for himself. The sensation which rightness gives, however, is described as an *agreeable* feeling, or pleasure, and further distinguished as a feeling of *approbation* or *approval*, and as a kind of liking; while the sensation of wrongness is *disagreeable*, and described as a feeling of *disapprobation*, aversion, dislike, or distaste.

And the feeling of rightness or approbation, again, involves, or carries along with it in some way, a *sense* of duty—the feeling or consciousness that what is right is at the same time *obligatory*, or that it is our *duty* to do what is right, as is expressed in

the general moral law : Do what you discern to be right, or: Make all your actions conform to your idea of rightness ; and the feeling of *responsibility*, or of meriting punishment, when conduct is contrary to the feelings of moral sense.

Thus the faculty has been described as "a moral sense or faculty of mind which instantly discerns moral good and evil by a kind of sensation or taste, independently of reason and thought." Also, as a "moral sense or instinct whereby we conceive and feel a pleasure in right and a distaste and aversion to wrong, prior to all reflection on their natures and consequences." Also as a "sensibility to the various gradations of the moral scale," and compared to "an ear for music." "On contemplating actions," it has been said, "we experience a feeling of an agreeable or disagreeable kind, and discerning the character or quality of these actions by means of the feelings which they awaken, we pronounce them to be good, or bad."

This is essentially the account given by Hutcheson, Martineau, and many others.

"It is plain that reason is only a subservient power of our ultimate determinations either of perception or will. The ultimate end is settled by some *sense*: by some sense we enjoy happiness, and self-love determines to it without reasoning. Reason can only direct to the means, or compare two ends previously constituted by some other immediate power" (Hutcheson).

Still the analogy with the physical senses must not, it is admitted, be carried too far. These have physical organs; moral sense has not. These are external, or affected from without; it is internal or reflex—affected by action as represented in the mind (and thus far like emotion). Yet reason has nothing to do with it. The judgment is grounded wholly on passive feeling. "The first perceptions cannot be the object of reason but of immediate sense or feeling" (Adam Smith).

§ 75. But there are serious objections to this account of moral intuition as being the work of

But there are objections to the moral



sense theory  
of Con-  
science.

It makes our  
idea of right-  
ness to be  
only indirect  
and symboli-  
cal.

And to de-  
pend on the  
most vari-  
able and  
untrust-  
worthy  
function of  
mind, *vis.*,  
feeling.

a distinct and special faculty, and as being like the perception of the physical qualities of things through the senses.

(1) It makes our knowledge of right and wrong to depend on a sensation or feeling. To this there are several objections. (i) It makes the case of moral quality to be the same as that of the secondary qualities of matter, such as heat and colour. The existence of such qualities is revealed to us in our sensations, and we know them and can think them only in terms of our sensations, and therefore only *representatively* and *symbolically*, and not as they really are in themselves. So, if moral quality be revealed to us only by a special and unanalysable feeling of this sort, it will be known to us only as represented and symbolized by the feeling, and thinkable only in terms of the feeling. In other words, it will be in itself only an x, or unknown something. And further, (ii) by making moral judgment depend on feeling, it makes it depend on the most variable and unreliable of all mental functions. For the same thing may produce one kind of feeling in one person, and another in another, and even different feelings in the same person at different times; so that we cannot rely upon its giving a real knowledge of things and qualities. Thus people, judging by their feelings alone, come to pronounce quite different and contradictory judgments on things; which shows that this way of judging is inadequate.

Hence it makes moral conduct to be too much a matter of blind impulse and instinct, depending on a feeling springing up in our minds we do not know how nor why. For though we know that the feeling corresponds to a quality in the action, we know

nothing further about that quality.

(2) Those who give this account of the faculty seem to think in the following way.—The surest and most instantaneous of all our cognitions are those which we have of external things, through special faculties of sense-perception. But moral judgment also is immediate and certain. Therefore moral judgment also must be by a special sense. Thus they seem to think that a special faculty would make moral judgment more definite and certain.

And is founded on a mistaken view of what is most direct and reliable in knowledge.

This however is questionable. In reality it isolates the judgment too much from the mind as a whole, and would make it to be an inessential and unnecessary function rather than an essential one; because a particular sense can be dispensed with, without destroying the integrity of mind as a whole. One may be without smell, or hearing, or even vision, and be a person all the same. So it might be with moral faculty, if it were a special sense.

(3) It is difficult to see how this feeling would give us the idea of obligation, duty, or moral law. The mere fact that an action gives us such and such a feeling, does not explain why we should be bound to do the action; nor why there should be a universal law that men should do such and such actions. Feeling by itself is blind, so to speak, and does not bind one to anything. Therefore the moral sense theory cannot give a good explanation of moral law or duty.

And fails to give a satisfactory account of moral law.

Hence those who take this view of moral quality and judgment generally appeal to external laws and sanctions in order to explain obligation, i.e., to rewards and punishments and the hopes and fears occasioned by them, and thus fall back on hedonistic motives.

Martineau's account of moral quality and judgment.

His theory of an absolute scale of moral worth or hierarchy of springs of action.

The bottom of the scale.

§ 76. The peculiar account of moral judgment given by Dr. James Martineau may be referred to here, in connection with the moral sense system. He assumes that the springs of action have a fixed and unalterable order of moral worth, and form a hierarchy of rank, rising one above another in a scale of moral worth, from the malevolent impulses at the bottom to the moral sentiments at the top (§ 22). Thus—

(1) The lowest in the scale will be the acquired repulsions, or malevolent impulses, which, if they really exist, spring from a love of evil for its own sake, and therefore can never be right under any circumstances, and may therefore be said to be below zero in the moral scale.

(2) Next above these, the secondary organic propensions, or acquired appetites, such as the love of eating and drinking for the sake of the pleasure which they give; which may not be wrong, indeed, but can never possess any degree of positive merit, and are often harmful.

(3) Next, the primary organic propensions, or natural appetites, which are necessary to the preservation of life, but are low in the moral scale because they serve directly only the purposes of organic life.

(4) Next, the natural propensities to physical activity and exercise, which are higher than the appetites proper, because they express the animal phase of human nature, whereas the appetites correspond to the vegetative only.

(5) Next, the love of gain and wealth, which are ranked thus high, because they involve exercise of the intellectual powers; and, though egoistic, yet supply the means and materials of altruistic beneficence.

(6) Next, the various forms of what is called sentimentality, or the doing of charitable actions for the pleasure which it gives ourselves to do them.

(7) Next, secondary or acquired propensions, such as the love of liberty, and ambition or love of power, which is placed thus high in the scale

because, though egoistic, the objects at which it aims—rank and power—are necessary conditions of beneficence in its highest degrees.

(8) Next, the *intellectual* and *aesthetic sentiments*, which are clearly allied to altruistic feeling, because the true and the beautiful are capable of being communicated and enjoyed by all.

(9) Next, and much higher than these, come the purely *altruistic* and *social feelings* themselves—affection, friendship, compassion, and the rest.

(10) But above all stands the regulating feeling of *conscience, moral sense, or sensibility to what is higher and lower*, better and worse, among the other springs, and *reverence* for what is higher and better.

The top of the scale.

Now in voluntary action we have always two springs or motives before our mind's eye, of which one is necessarily higher and better than the other in respect of moral worth; and in willing, we have to choose between them. Conscience is sensibility to differences of higher and lower, better and worse, among the springs of action. Of two alternative springs, it gives us a *sense, or immediate feeling, of the superiority of the one over the other in respect of moral worth*; and this worth or moral quality in which one is felt superior to the other, is a simple, ultimate quality, altogether unique, and not to be compared with any other quality whatever—neither with sense-qualities, nor with æsthetic harmony and beauty.

Hence the method of judgment according to Martineau.

Comparison of two rival springs, and instinctive feeling that the one is higher than the other in the moral scale.

An action is right, therefore, when, in willing it, we choose the higher of the two alternative springs of action; and wrong, when we choose the lower. But a spring which is the lower in one case, *i.e.*, when compared with one alternative, may be higher in another case when compared with a different alternative; and the corresponding action which was wrong in the former case will be right in the latter. Thus, if A and B be the rival springs, we shall act rightly if we follow A, and wrongly if we follow B. But if B and C be the alternatives, we shall act rightly in choosing B. And so on through

Hence the rightness of an action depends on its position in the scale as compared with its alternative.

And hence the same action is right in one place, and wrong in another.

But this account is open to objections.

And especially to this, that the simple moral judgment does not consist in judging one action better or worse than another, but in judging it good or bad in connection with its circumstances.

But further consideration of the nature of moral quality will guide us to a better understanding of moral faculty and lead us to the *Intellectual* or

the scale. Thus every motive is right in its own place (except the malevolent impulses), and wrong only when chosen to the rejection of an alternative of higher worth.

The objection to this account is partly (*i*) the same as to other forms of the moral sense explanation, *viz.*, that it makes right conduct to depend too much on blind instinctive impulse. The mind, he says, is "a casket of stirring instincts;" and instinctive impulses in their original and natural forms are, he assumes, necessarily right in their natural places. Still, even if this be so, instinctive tendency can be at best only a passive and negative kind of virtue. Partly also, (*ii*) that the scale of moral worth which he takes to be the standard of all moral judgment, is evidently a product of philosophical reflection, such as cannot possibly be present to every mind. And especially, (*iii*) that the above description does not correspond to the real process of moral judgment in its ultimate and simplest form. We judge an action by considering it in relation to its circumstances. We are not bound to compare it always with an alternative action, and choose between the two. This comparison and selection is the method of prudential or utilitarian judgment, rather than of moral--judging which of two courses will be the more profitable.

And it may be said that it harmonizes more with the voluntarist and automatist view of mind than with Martineau's own philosophy in its other aspects.

§ 77. (B) It is obvious, therefore, that the assumption of a special moral sense involves an assimilation of moral quality to the secondary qualities of body; and that this, again, would deprive us of all direct knowledge of right and wrong, and leave us with only an indirect, phenomenal, and therefore symbolical knowledge. It remains to be seen whether moral judgment may not be better explained without assuming any such special sense, *viz.*

as a joint product of the higher powers of mind which by their co-operation constitute *reason*.

*Rational Theory.*

Now moral judgment is judgment of voluntary action; and the nature of the judgment, and therefore of the judging faculty, is suggested to us by the nature of its object, *viz.*, voluntary action. Moral quality cannot be "simple and unique" in the sense assumed above, because its object is not a "simple thing," like an object of sense-perception. Voluntary action is a complex change of relations brought about within an exceedingly complicate system of related terms (§ 64), and the quality discerned cannot be anything other than a relational quality, the knowledge of which involves the consideration of many terms, and changes of relation between terms.

Now the moral quality of an action consists in the nature of the changes of relation which it produces

The quality must, therefore, come under the head of what we call fitness, keeping, congruity, proportion or harmony of relation; and, instead of being absolutely unique, must have some analogy to beauty and harmony in the physical and intellectual spheres, and indeed to that harmony of relations in which life itself consists (§ 65). It is a quality, therefore, such as could not be perceived through a simple act of sense-perception, but only through *an intellectual process of discrimination, comparison, and intuition analogous to the intuition of the beautiful*. Now an animal may receive as many and as vivid sensations from a well-proportioned object as we do, *e.g.*, of impenetrability, form and colour of a building but has no consciousness of its symmetry and beauty. The comprehension of such qualities, therefore, requires more than simple sense-perception—it requires an exercise of the higher mental power called *reason*.

And discerning fitness and unfitness of relation is a function of Reason or Intelligence.

And is analogous to the discerning of harmony and discord among things.

In other words, rightness must be a relational quality, or consist in a kind of relation; and this relation in which rightness consists, must itself consist in a peculiar kind of fitness, keeping, congruity, proportion, *viz.*, between the agent who acts, with his circumstances before and after the action, and the persons who are affected or acted on by the action, with their circumstances before and after the action; and wrongness must consist in a peculiar kind of unfitness, incongruity, want of keeping, or disproportion. Thus, moral rightness of conduct will consist in symmetry and harmony, keeping and unity of parts; and instead of being absolutely unique and analogous to the sense-qualities of things, must have some analogy rather to the higher forms of the beautiful in the physical and intellectual spheres, which consist in symmetry and harmony, keeping and unity of parts, and to that harmony of relations in which life itself consists.

Moral Faculty therefore is fundamentally Reason applied to the judgment of what is good and bad in conduct.

§ 78. And from this it follows that the faculty which judges right and wrong is not so much a distinct faculty analogous to the faculties of sense-perception, as a special application of the general intellectual power by which we discern and understand the relations of things, their proportion and disproportion, harmony and discord, symmetry and deformity, *viz.*, *Intelligence* or *Reason*; and that the feeling which arises in exercise of the faculty is not of the nature of a primary sense-feeling preceding the element of cognition as its *ground*, but of an emotion or sentiment following it as its *consequence*.

Hence we may describe moral faculty as a complex power in which the higher intellectual and emotional functions of mind meet and co-operate—

(i) Fundamentally, it is a faculty of *intellectual*!

*discernment*,—in other words, a special application, of those rational powers by which we discern the relations of things, and the attributes of fitness and unfitness, proportion and disproportion, harmony and discord, beauty and deformity inherent in their relations. It does not consist in having first a subjective feeling, and judging that there must be something in actions which occasions the feeling; but in directly perceiving and understanding an *objective truth, viz.*, that the intended results are in keeping or out of keeping with the circumstances of the agent and those affected by the action, and produce thereby harmony or discord of relations, and agree or disagree therefore with what is eternally and immutably right in the relations of rational beings.

And gives an immediate cognition of a particular kind of objective truth, *viz.*, what is essentially and eternally fit and unfit in the relations of things as determined by the actions of rational beings.

(iv) But cognition and thought naturally surrounds itself with *feeling* or *affection*, for mind cannot but be *passively affected by the results of its own perception and thought*, and therefore cannot but be affected by its perception of the harmony and discord of its own actions; and the affection produced is what we call *moral sentiment*—satisfaction or shame, approval or indignation. But it is not a case of feeling giving rise to perception and thought (as in sense-perception), but of perception and thought giving rise to feeling (as in the case of the emotions—fear, hope, gratitude, the beautiful, and the rest). We do not say that our conduct is right or wrong because it gives us subjectively an agreeable or disagreeable feeling; but it gives us a feeling of pride or shame because we have first perceived the *objective fact* that it is right or wrong.

But knowledge affects the whole system with corresponding emotion; and moral knowledge with moral emotion or sentiment.

Thus moral faculty is not a special faculty on a



level with other faculties, but rather the culmination and resultant of all the higher faculties, intellectual and emotional. Fundamentally, it is intellection, but thought clothes itself in emotion, and the thought and its emotion are inseparable. Thus the cognition of rightness or wrongness in our own conduct surrounds itself with pride or shame; in another person's action, with approval or indignation. And the intellectual power and the emotional capacity of being affected by its cognitions must be regarded as constituting together the moral faculty. And its judgments are based not on subjective sensation, but on objective cognition of "eternal and immutable truth."

Hence the fundamental virtue will be fairness of relation, i.e., justice, and the other virtues will be resolvable ultimately into this.

§ 79. Hence the Rational explanation of the faculty and judgment evidently makes justice and injustice to be the fundamental virtue and vice, and right and wrong to consist fundamentally in fairness and unfairness; which are equivalent to proportion and disproportion, fitness and unfitness of relation. Even benevolence will have to be understood as a restoring of the equilibrium of relations which has been disturbed by exclusive adherence to other and lower rules of action. We shall thus have to conceive of higher and more general rules of fairness as correcting the results of lower and narrower ones; and to think of the perfect individual and social life as resulting from a due balance and proportion of lower and higher motives.

And indeed the other theories tacitly assume such a power of moral intuition.

And finally, it is easy to show that both the hedonist and the idealist judgments suppose and depend upon the intuitional one here described: for both suppose a kind of goodness which cannot be perceived in any other way than intuitively, as a kind of goodness inherent in the form of actions. For—

(a) It is obvious that even utilitarians, who affect to deny the existence of an intuitive faculty

of moral cognition, yet, while maintaining that pleasure is the end, have tacitly assumed all the time that there is such a thing as proportion, fitness, fairness in the distribution of the means and materials of pleasure, and that we have a power of discerning it intuitively. Thus they have always tacitly admitted the reality of intuitive justice, or fairplay.

(b) And, again, the idealist or perfectionist standard is equally dependent on such a power of intuition. Its ideal is an ideal of perfect character. But character manifests itself in action, and can be judged good or bad only by judging the actions in which it manifests itself. We cannot, therefore, judge character, nor form any ideal of what is perfect in character, without having a power of judging intuitively what is good and bad in particular actions.

§ 80. We conclude, therefore, that moral rightness and wrongness are attributes inherent in the form of every action, and can be discerned intuitively by considering merely the terms of the action, and the changes of relation which it brings about among them—without stopping to consider whether it has been commanded or forbidden, or to draw inferences as to its future consequences, whether to pleasure or to the perfection of self—and that Moral Faculty is an application of the general rational power of discerning fitness and unfitness of relations. But various objections have been brought against the view of an *intuitive* cognition of moral rightness. Most of them apply, indeed, to the theory of a special moral sense, which we have set aside. But we may notice the following as applying to the intuitionist account in general.—

(1) That it ascribes to moral judgment greater precision, certainty, and infallibility than it ever really attains. If we could discern what is right

But objections have been brought against the theory of an Intuitive Moral Faculty—though they apply chiefly to the moral sense theory.

1. That it is inconsistent with the undoubted diversity of moral judgments.

and wrong in the changing relations of life with such intuitive certainty as belongs to direct perception, there could not have been so many divergencies of opinion as there really have been, regarding what is right. For what has been considered right in one age or in one place, has often been considered wrong in another. Hardly any moral rules can be pointed to, that have been universally recognised as right. Instead of perceiving intuitively and once for all what is good and bad in conduct, men seem rather to have been learning it gradually by a slow mental development from age to age, and rising only slowly to a higher and clearer conception of it. (The intuitional theory is inconsistent with this diversity of moral judgment, and with this fact of moral progress.

But this does not apply to the explanation of the quality as a harmony of relations.

Now such diversity of moral judgment as there really has been, tells strongly no doubt against the theory of a special moral sense. If we had a special sense for discerning moral rightness as we have for discerning qualities of taste, smell, and colour, we should expect to find as little diversity in the judgments of different times about the moral quality of actions as about the sense-qualities of things; and expect as little progress in the one kind of knowledge as in the other.

For then such diversity will not imply want nor weakness of judging faculty.

But the case is different when we understand moral judgment as a cognition of the changing relations between terms. In this case, the uniformity of the judgment will depend on the uniformity with which all the different terms and all their relations are taken into account, and brought under the mind's eye in the act of intuition, without intermixture of unreal ones.

For it is possible for the judging mind to be ignorant of some of the terms. It is possible for it also, under the influence of passion, prejudice, and custom, to overlook or undervalue some of them. And it is possible for it to fill in unreal terms from imagination. Then the resulting judgments will be different. And when allowance is made for ignorance of circumstances, for the activity of imagination, and for the blinding influences of passion, prejudice and custom, there is no difficulty in accounting for such differences of judgment as there really have been.

But will result from ignorance of the real terms, and intermixture of fictitious ones.

The truth is, that moral progress has been dependent altogether upon progress in intellectual comprehension, and emotional capacity—upon development

Moral progress is mainly intellectual power of discriminating and representing things and their relations as they really are.

(i) Of the intellectual powers of discriminating terms and relations, and of grasping them together in their changing relations ;

(ii) Of the intellectual powers of inferring and representing things and relations of things permanently before the mind's eye in imagination, especially the circumstances and relations of other persons than ourselves ;

(iii) And, we may add, of the emotional capacity of being affected by things and their relations as represented in imagination and thought—though this will depend mainly or wholly on the clearness of comprehension and representation.

Given these powers of discriminating, combining, and representing in thought, the changing relations of self and others, as determined by voluntary actions, the intellectual cognition of what is right and wrong in these relations, the corresponding emotions cannot fail to follow. Thus moral progress is at bottom intellectual progress, which carries emotional along with it.

(2) It may be objected, also, that such moral intuition as is here assumed, even if it could tell us

2. That it makes the judgment consist in blind affirmation that such and such things are right, without explaining why they are right.

that such and such actions are right, could not tell us why they are right; that it would, therefore, make moral rightness to be a dogmatic affirmation and command, presented from without, and requiring unintelligent acceptance and obedience (like the legal theories); and would, therefore, savour too much of abstract formalism and dogmatism. We require an explanation which will make moral rightness more intelligible to the understanding, and acceptable to the heart.

But this is really explained by the nature of rightness itself, and by the ideal theory.

But this objection also applies chiefly to the moral sense theory. The intellectual explanation of moral quality as a harmony of relations, carries its own explanation along with it—especially if we consider the meaning of harmony in the world-system. And further, the harmony of actions which we perceive intuitively, both manifests and promotes that inner harmony of springs and motives, and consequent perfection of nature which is the idealist standard, and finds its full explanation in the ideal. For though the idealist standard would be impossible without the intuitionist one, yet the latter finds its full philosophical explanation in the former.

3. It may be objected also that actions are only means to ends, and cannot possibly be right in themselves and in virtue of their form merely.

(3) It may be objected also (*viz.*, from the side of the idealist theory) that the intuitionist principle, by making actions to be right and good in themselves in virtue of their form merely, involves a radical misunderstanding. Nothing is really good in itself and for its own sake except self-conscious, rational personality—in other words mind, soul, spirit, which is conscious of itself and its own good or evil, and which alone is “being for itself.” This is the only end—everything else is only means to end. Mere things and abstractions

cannot be good in themselves; and therefore actions, which apart from persons are only abstractions, cannot be good in themselves, but only as means to ends. An action, therefore, whether in keeping or out of keeping with its circumstances can be good or bad only as means to a personal end. And the ultimate personal end cannot be anything that leaves the essential nature of the person unaffected, but must lie in the essential nature of the person himself, and consist in his own essential good, or perfection of nature.

But only in virtue of their end, *vis.*, the realization of the perfect self.

This is true, but is not relevant as an objection against the intuitionist explanation. The harmony of conduct with circumstances which we discern intuitively, is a manifestation of that inward harmony of disposition which is essential to the perfect self, and may, therefore, be considered good in itself, as the intuitionist theory assumes; and every action which is thus outwardly and formally right tends to confirm by habit the inward harmony of the self's own nature, and thereby tends towards the realization of the perfect self, and is therefore good as a means, as the idealist theory assumes. The ideal standard of a perfect self is, therefore, only the philosophical filling up and completion of what is implied in the intuitional standard of harmony between conduct and circumstances.

But the self both manifests and perfects itself through action.

Therefore formal rightness of action is both good in itself and good as a means.

And further, an ideal standard, as we have already found, could not be attained at all without an intuitive perception of the rightness of particular actions, and therefore a power of moral intuition.

§ 81. IV. Finally, therefore, as to the faculty or faculties of judgment implied in the *idealist* system; which makes the ultimate standard of moral judg-

What view of the Faculty then is supposed in the Idealistic Theory?

ment to be the highest good, and the highest good to consist in self-realization, or the perfection of one's own essential nature attained by the voluntary effort of self. We have already come to the conclusion that this view of the highest good and of the ultimate standard of moral judgment is essentially true. But we have concluded, also, that this is not the standard of every-day moral judgment, but an ideal arrived at by philosophical reflection, and by the help of the ordinary intuitive judgment and standard already described.

It evidently supposes certain mental powers by which we are able to form our ideal of the perfect self.

By what mental processes, then, do we arrive at this final conception of the perfect self and highest good? In the first place, we could not arrive at any conception of what is good in the essential nature of mind without being able to judge intuitively what is good and bad in particular actions, because it is only through these that we can know the nature of mind. The ideal theory, therefore, takes for granted the intuitionist account of the faculty and judgment. But, at the same time, the ideal held up as good is supposed, in the idealist explanation, to be the ultimate and highest good of finite minds; and the highest good of minds cannot be thought of apart from their place and function in the system of things as a whole, which is the subject of philosophy.

Hence in forming our ideal of the perfect self two lines of thought must meet and combine in synthesis.—

And these will include certain powers of perception and induction, *vis.*, a power of judging the

(a) The judgment of individual actions by exercise of the faculty of moral intuition, and the formation thereby of a general idea and standard of what is right in the mutual relations of men in

society, as they appear to ordinary experience—the ordinary intuitive standard—because there is no way of understanding what is good and bad in the inner nature of persons than by judging the outward manifestations of their nature in their actions.

For the fairness, proportionateness, fitness which intuition discerns in actions and calls their rightness or goodness, both

(1) Manifests a certain harmony, balance and proportion of feelings and impulses thus far in the nature of the person who performs them—showing that the end or good has already been thus far realized in his nature, and may, therefore, be regarded as a good and end in itself; and

(2) Contributes towards the more perfect realization of the good in that person's nature—because every volition and action leaves its traces in his nature, which, by the law of accumulation and habit, helps to modify his nature for the better in the future—and may, therefore, be regarded as a means towards an end.

(b) And the exercise of philosophical reflection and deduction. For every finite mind has its own place and function as a factor of the world-system. Its perfection, therefore, must consist ultimately in its perfect adaptation to, and performance of its function as a factor of the whole; and it will not be possible to attain a complete and adequate idea of the perfect self without first understanding the self's place and function in the system of things, and deducing an idea of its perfection from our previously formed idea of its place and function.

We cannot expect, therefore, to form an adequate conception of the ideal self without first attaining some understanding of its place and function in the plan and purpose of the world. But such an under-

rightness of particular actions—the Faculty of Intuition already described—and power of forming, from such judgments, a general idea of the inner nature which manifests itself in such actions.

And at the same time a power of philosophical deduction, to determine what follows from the place and function of the self as a factor of the world-system.

Hence the Idealist System supposes an



application  
of the deduc-  
tive method  
to Ethics.

standing can be attained only through a process of philosophical (including metaphysical) thought; and has been the object mainly aimed at in all the different systems of philosophy.

Thus Spinoza called his deductive system of metaphysic by the title of "*Ethica Geometrically Demonstrated*," because, though it was occupied mainly in determining the ultimate nature and relations of Soul, Nature and God, its real object was to teach men how to regulate their lives. The different conclusions arrived at by the different schools—positivist, materialist and idealist—have been briefly indicated in dealing with the methods of ethical study (§ 14).

And a re-  
conciliation  
and synthe-  
sis of deduc-  
tive and  
inductive  
results.

We see, therefore, that the Idealist or Perfectionist Standard is attained by a synthesis of results arrived at by intuition, with others that can be reached only by a long and elaborate process of philosophical thought; and that, as worked out by an idealist philosophy, it is not opposed to, but rather an explanation and justification of the ordinary intuitional standard; but that it is too remote from ordinary thought to serve as a standard for every-day moral judgments.

But if this standard is ever applied to the judgment of particular actions, *viz.*, to confirm or correct the ordinary intuitive judgment, this also will have to be done by a process of deduction; we shall have to deduce from our idea of the perfect self, the way in which such a self would manifest itself under particular given circumstances.

The princi-  
pal problems  
of moral  
science are  
those of the

### XXIII. Summary of Results.

§ 82. Thus the fundamental question of moral science is the question of the *judgment* of actions as right or wrong. This, again, includes the question of the *quality* or *attribute* of

rightness which the judgment affirms or denies of actions, and which, when generalized into a concept, we speak of as the *standard*. And this, again, involves the question of the *faculty* or *power* by which this quality is discerned and the judgment performed. But it is mainly on the second of these questions that moral study and investigation have turned, *viz.*, the question of the *quality* or *standard*, as being the most fundamental. And by a standard of judgment in general, we mean a general idea of a quality or a group of qualities (or of a thing possessing these qualities), which we carry about with us in our minds, and with which we compare new things which come before us, in order to judge whether they possess the same quality or qualities in any form or degree, and therefore come under the same class.

Judgment,  
Standard  
and Faculty.

But the most  
fundamental  
is that of the  
Standard.

Thus the ideas of colour, temperature, beauty, wisdom, greatness are mental standards which we have before our minds in idea, when we judge things to be green, or cold, or beautiful, or persons to be wise or great. In some cases, the concept or mental standard by which we judge is embodied in a physical standard for accurate measurement, as a measuring chain, a thermometer, a pound-weight, or a diagram; but in the majority of cases it remains purely mental.

In moral judgment, of course, the standard can not be reduced to any physical form such as a measuring chain or a thermometer, but remains an idea of the mind, like beauty or wisdom.

§ 83. And the principal theories as to the standard according to which we judge the moral goodness and badness of actions, with the corresponding views as to the judgment and faculty which judges, have been these.—

And the  
principal  
solutions  
proposed  
of these  
problems  
are the  
following.

The Legal theories.

I. Some have thought that the standard by which we judge the rightness and wrongness of actions is a *law* or *laws* imposed upon us by command from without, whether it be (1) the command of God, or (2) that of the government, or (3) the customs of society.

We may assume these laws to be right simply because we are commanded to obey them—the command being all that is needed to make them right. And we may compare our actions with them, and judge whether they are in conformity or not. And we may regard their conformity or non-conformity to the law as equivalent to rightness or wrongness.

But we have found that, if rightness consisted in legality merely, it could be made obligatory only by rewards and punishments; which is contrary to the true meaning of moral rightness. This cannot, therefore, be an ultimate, but only a subordinate standard, so that we must look for a higher one.

Teleological theories.

II. Others again say that the standard is an idea which we have of some ultimate *end* or *good* to be attained; and that moral judgment of actions consists in judging whether, in their ultimate results, they will be consistent with, or conducive to this highest good, and therefore involves inference as to the future results of action; and that the faculty is a power of conceiving such an ultimate end or good, and perceiving or understanding it to be good, and of judging by inference from past experience what actions will be conducive to that end. This will include :—

Hedonism.

(a) *Hedonism*—that the ultimate end or highest good is pleasure, which again will include

Egoistic,

(i) *Egoism*—that the standard to each indivi-

dual is the idea of the greatest possible pleasure of his own life on the whole ; and that the judgment consists merely in inferring, from past experiences, what actions will produce most pleasure, and alleviate pain most to himself in the future ; so that the faculty involves nothing more than the ordinary power of remembering the past, and drawing inferences from the past to the future. This, therefore, makes morality to be identical with *prudence*. And—

(ii) *Universalism or altruism*—which makes the standard to be the idea which we are able to form of happiness in general, or of the greatest possible happiness of all ; and makes the moral judgment of actions to be a judgment as to whether they will be consistent with, or conducive to happiness in general (or that of particular persons, if they do not affect the general) ; so that here, again, the judgment will be founded on inference. Here, however, the faculty will include something more than mere power of drawing inferences—it must include some spring of action which will impel us to promote the good of others, as well as our own ; and this spring of action will be a capacity of feeling or sentiment. And the feeling here supposed will be essentially fellow-feeling or sympathy, which enables us to enter into, and feel the joys and sufferings of others ; and thereby impels us to do what we judge to be conducive to their happiness. To altruism, therefore, the faculty will be essentially *sympathy* ; but the judgment will involve inference, *viz.*, as to the bearing of actions on future pleasure and pain.

And Altruistic with sympathy as its Faculty.

(b) The theory of *Self-realization or Perfection*

Idealism  
which de-  
pends upon  
Intuition of  
Reason.

—that the standard is the idea which we are able to form of the highest essential perfection of rational beings, attainable by means of the realization in each individual of the highest capabilities and potentialities which are latent in his nature, and which can be realized only by the harmonious co-operation of all individuals in one social organism.

The judgment, then, will be the act of discerning whether a particular action, considered with all its known consequences, will be consistent with, or conducive to the essential perfection of the agent and other rational beings affected; and will be an inferential judgment founded mainly on deduction.

And the faculty will be *reason*, considered as the power of forming a conception of what is most perfect in a rational being, and of judging what action will be most consistent with, and conducive to that ultimate and highest good.

And Intui-  
tionism  
which is not  
only justified  
in itself, but  
is tacitly  
assumed in  
the others,

III. We have found that the above theory of self-realization is valid as a philosophical explanation of moral rightness, but that it is too remote and inaccessible to the ordinary mind to serve as the ordinary standard of judgment. But we have found that the rightness and wrongness of actions are, for practical purposes of judgment, sufficiently expressed and manifested in the *form* of the actions themselves, *i.e.*, in their intended results, considered in relation to their prior and posterior circumstances, independently of their being antecedently commanded or forbidden, and of their subsequent consequences to pleasure or pain; and that they can be discerned intuitively on merely considering the circumstances of the action.

And we have found that this intuition of inherent rightness implies, not indeed a special

faculty on the same level with the faculties of sense-perception ; but a faculty which consists in a synthesis and co-operation of the higher intellectual and emotional functions, enabling us to *discern* directly or intuitively the quality of rightness or wrongness inherent in the forms of actions, and to form thereby a general idea or standard of what is right and obligatory, and at the same time to *feel* the beauty of right doing and the deformity of wrong, and consequent satisfaction and remorse.

And of  
which also  
Reason is the  
Faculty.

This may be called the *intuitional* theory, from the nature of the faculty supposed ; because the rightness of actions or moral standard, and the duty or law of conforming to the standard, are supposed by this theory to be discerned *intuitively*, *i.e.*, to be self-evident without inference or reasoning. And we have found that this explanation is not only justified in itself, but is tacitly assumed in the other explanations, and must therefore be accepted as the true solution of the fundamental moral problem.

## PART IV.

### MORAL LAW.

**XXIV. Obligation and Rights.** § 84. When we judge a particular action to be *right* on our part, we at the same time judge that we are under an *obligation* to do it, or that it is our *duty* to do it, or that we *ought* to do it. And this conviction surrounds itself with an emotion which modifies the whole mental system, tending to absorb and adapt to itself the other feelings and desires of the moment, and to rise into an impulse and desire to identify one's self

The judgment of rightness is followed by that of obligation or duty.

And when it is our duty to perform an action,

some one else has a right to its performance.

And obligation may be described as Moral Law.

with that particular end and line of action, and an aversion to the opposite. And the conviction that it is our *duty* to act so and so in relation to others is accompanied by a correlative conviction that these others have a corresponding *right* to be so treated by us; so that *obligation* on the one side and *right* on the other are reciprocal relations. And this general truth, that we are bound or under an obligation to do what is right, we often express by saying that we are subject to *Moral Law*, or that moral law requires us to act so and so; where by *Law*, however, we mean not anything imposed by an external power, but what is required by our own essential nature, and harmony with our circumstances.

Hence the meaning and ground of Moral Law or obligation is a fundamental question of moral science.

Now the above judgment and impulse of obligation requires further consideration in any analysis of our moral nature. What is their origin and nature? How do they come to be connected with the fundamental judgment of moral rightness? Why are we *bound to do what we judge to be right, and avoid what we see to be wrong? and why have other people a right to insist on the one being done and the other avoided by us?*

Thus it may be asked—

Now obligation may be regarded either as arising out of moral rightness, analytically.

(a) Is the relation an *analytic* one, in the sense that obligation is essentially identical with, or is contained in rightness? Thus it may be, that obligation is only another name for rightness, and that rightness and obligatoriness are only the same thing viewed from different points of view. Or it may be, that they are distinct judgments indeed, but so correlated to each other that each implies and necessitates the other, rightness implying obligation and obligation rightness.

(b) Or is their relation a *synthetic* one, in the

sense that obligation is something distinct and additional, which has to be accounted for separately, and added on to the rightness of an action from some other source? Thus it may be, that action can be judged right without its being thought of as being obligatory, until it has been made to be so by some other cause. It is chiefly the possibility, at least, of this latter alternative that makes the subject to need separate inquiry.

Or as added on to it from without, synthetically.

§ 85. Now obligation means literally the state of being *bound*. We say that we are in some sense bound to do what is right. Duty, again, means literally what is *due* by us, being of the same root and meaning as debt—something which we owe to others; whence it is also sometimes called oughtness. And when we are under a duty or obligation to do anything for another, the other is said to have a right to its being done. Thus duties or obligations on the one side imply rights on the other, so that obligations and rights are reciprocal. The question, therefore, is: Why are we bound to do what we judge to be right? Or: Why is the performance of it *due* by us to other persons? Or: Why do we owe it as a *debt* to others? Or: Why have others a *right* to its being done by us?

The question therefore is: Why are we bound, as if by law, to do what is right?

It is to be borne in mind, however, that the obligation, or state of being bound to do a thing, is to a certain extent figurative. It does not mean that our hands or feet are literally bound, or that we are physically compelled to do what we ought to do. This would be contrary to the nature of voluntary action, which alone can have moral quality, and be an object of moral judgment. What then do we really mean by obligation, or *being bound* in the moral sense?

Of course, moral law is law in a different sense from physical and political law.



Implying no external constraining force.

We use the phrase with reference not to an external force constraining the will from the outside; but to a spring of action, or motive-force rising and working inside the mind, in the form of idea and desire, and tending to make or evolve the volition from within. The question of obligation, therefore, comes to this: What *ground* or *reason* have we for thinking ourselves thus *bound* to do what we perceive to be right, and for thinking that others have a *right* to demand it of us?

The question, best considered in connection with the different theories of the standard.

Now in considering the different possible views of the nature of moral obligation, and its connection with moral judgment, we shall have to consider it in connection with the different theories of the judgment and standard as stated before, *i.e.*, different views of the nature and meaning of rightness; and consider what is implied in each of them with regard to the obligation of doing what we judge to be right, *i.e.*, the motive-force impelling us in each case to do what is right.

I. According to the Legal Theories, moral law is created by political, social or divine command.

§ 86. I. We may begin, therefore, with what has been called the *Legal Theory* of the standard and judgment—that the standard is a law or code of laws commanded and imposed by some external power—whether God, or the state, or society collective (*i.e.*, required by the manners and customs of society)—and that the correctness or wrongness of actions consists merely in their conformity or non-conformity with these laws.

What, then, will be the obligation or motive-force prompting us to do what is right in this sense, and deterring us from doing what is wrong? In other words, what reason or motive can we have for doing what we judge to be right according to this view of rightness?

We can see that, if it be external command and will that makes actions to be right, then it must be external command and will also that supplies the reason and motive why we should do them—in other words, supplies the binding or impelling force—the obligation. And this can only be by enforcing or sanctioning the laws, *viz.*, by attaching rewards and punishments to them.

The same command which makes actions to be right will also make them obligatory.

"A man is said to be obliged," Paley says, "when he is urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another. As we should not be obliged to obey the laws of the magistrate unless rewards and punishments, pleasure and pain, somehow or other depended upon our obedience; so neither should we, without some reason, be obliged to do what is right, to practice virtue, to obey the commands of God." "The moral law is imposed by an authority foreign to our personality. The bindingness of moral rules must emanate from another person."

Hence the obligation or motive force within the mind, which impels us to do what is right and deters us from doing what is wrong, will, according to this theory of right and wrong, be nothing but the fear of future punishment and the hope of future reward from the authors of the laws.

The motive-force of obligation will consist therefore in fear of punishment and hope of reward.

Thus (1) in the case of governmental laws, there will be the fear of fine, imprisonment, banishment, or death—called the *political* sanctions.

(2) In the case of social laws (*i. e.*, the manners and customs of society), there will be the fear of public shame, reproof, excommunication, and all the hardships which follow from them—which are called the *social* sanctions.

(3) In the case of laws believed to be imposed

by God, there will be the hope of God's approval, and the fear of his displeasure, with the happiness and misery which will follow from them in the present, or in the future life—heaven or hell—which may be called the *religious* sanctions.

"Let it be asked: why am I obliged to keep my word? The answer will be, because I am urged to do so by a violent motive, resulting from the command of another, namely, the expectation of being after this life rewarded if I do, and punished if I do not. Therefore, the private happiness is our motive and the will of God is our rule" (Paley).

Thus, if rightness be only legality or conformity to law, and the obligation to conform to the law depends upon the sanctions, or rewards and punishments, appended to the law, then moral obligation will be superseded by hedonistic motives.

Hence the legal theories virtually reduce morality to egoism.

It will be seen, therefore, that this theory would reduce morality to egoistic Hedonism—because it makes moral conduct to consist merely in acting so as to obtain the pleasures of reward, and avoid the pains of punishment. And in fact Paley's system would practically reduce even religion to egoism, for he says that virtue (and therefore religion) consists "in doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness."

These considerations make it plain that the legal theory can give only a superficial account of obligation; and that, as the real and ultimate ground of moral rightness must be sought somewhere else than in external command, so the motive or binding force of obligation must be sought in something other than the rewards and punishments attached to commands.

## § 87. II. We consider next the views of obli-

II. What view of obligation then is implied in the Hedonistic Theories?

gation assumed in the *Hedonistic theories* which make pleasure to be the highest good, and conduciveness to pleasure to be the standard of right and wrong.

A. First, as to the view of obligation implied in the *Egoistic system*.—Egoism, we have found, makes the end to every one to be his own happiness; so that he will feel himself bound to adhere to the moral rules of justice and benevolence merely as means towards his own happiness, and in so far as they are conducive to his own happiness. In other words, he will be just, honest and benevolent towards others only in so far as it is for his own interest to be so—in so far as justice, honesty, and the like, are the best policy. What is it, then, that makes justice, honesty, benevolence and the other virtues (or what we call a virtuous life) to be the best policy to every man, *i.e.*, the most conducive to his happiness? Whatever motive force has this effect will be to him the only ground of obligation—the only force impelling him to be honest and just.

A. To egoism the only binding force will be hope of pleasure and fear of pain.

The impelling and binding force of obligation in this case will be the hope of good and the fear of evil resulting to himself as consequences of his actions—the hope of reward and the fear of punishment, making it to be to every man's interest to be temperate, honest, just, and virtuous generally.

Following from the laws of state, society, nature and God.

In other words, it will rest on what are spoken of as the sanctions, which will include again—

(1) The punishments imposed by political law—imprisonment, fine, death—the *political* sanctions;

(2) The rewards and punishments imposed by one's fellowmen in social intercourse; if he is not just and fair and benevolent to other men, they will not be so to him; so that he will lose *more* than he will gain, by dishonesty, injustice, and harshness—the *social* sanctions; and

(3) The pains and pleasures following from the laws of nature, and the rewards conferred and the

punishments imposed by God in the present and the future life—the *natural* and *theological* sanctions.

Thus the motive or binding force, which will regulate a man's conduct towards other men, will be fear of punishment from them, and hope of reward and benefit; and thus morality will be wholly identified with prudence or self-love.

§ 88. B. Next as to the view of obligation implied in the *Universalist system*, which by making the end and standard to every one to be the happiness of all, gives to morality an independent meaning and standing, distinct from, and independent of prudence.

B. To altruism the binding force of obligation will be, the force of sympathy and disinterested feeling, innate and acquired.

What, then, according to this system, will be the binding motive-force impelling men to do good to others, and to refrain from harming them?

The impelling and deterring force of obligation will be supplied by the *sympathetic* and *social* feelings, or power of entering into the thoughts and feelings of others—the partly *inherited* and partly *acquired* power of reproducing in our own minds the contents of other minds, and thinking and feeling their ideas and feelings over again—their pleasures and pains, hopes and fears, love and anger, gratitude and indignation, satisfaction and disappointment. And this power of identifying ourselves in so far with them, enjoying their joys, and suffering their pains, and thinking and feeling what they think and feel regarding ourselves, will be reinforced and strengthened by the power of representing to ourselves ideally beforehand the feelings of regret, shame, and remorse which this sympathetic power will raise in our own

minds, should we be guilty of neglecting or harming others (the internal *sanctions of conscience*).

Now this power of reproducing the feelings of others, and anticipating our own future feelings with regard to them, will produce a permanent mass of impulse, impelling us to promote the good of others, and deterring us from doing them harm. And the binding force of *moral* obligation will be really identical with this impelling and deterring force of sympathetic emotion and social sentiment (the genesis of which has been explained in § 53).

"The ultimate sanction of all morality (and ground of obligation is the pain more or less violent attendant on the violation of duty, which in properly cultivated natures rises in the more serious cases into a shrinking from it as an impossibility, and which is the essence of conscience. The extreme complexity of the feelings associated together in conscience has led many to ascribe a mystical character to moral obligation. But its binding force consists merely in the mass of feeling which must be broken through in order to do what violates our standard of right" (Mill).

Most hedonists admit, however, the insufficiency, when taken by itself, of this internal binding power of sympathy or conscience, with its internal sanctions of regret and shame; and make the obligatoriness of right doing to depend partly or mainly on the external sanctions of political and social reward and punishment (as according to the legal and egoistic theories).

But hedonists admit the insufficiency of these sanctions of conscience, and fall back on social and political ones.

"Undoubtedly this sanction of conscience has no binding efficacy," even Mill admits, "on those who do not possess the feelings it appeals to, and

sympathetic feeling in most individuals is much inferior to their selfish feelings, and often wanting altogether. On them morality has hold but through the external sanctions."

But in this way, morality is divided into two departments: *obligatory* morality with determinate, and *optional* with indeterminate obligations, according as they are, or are not enforced by external sanctions of reward and punishment. But this is obviously contrary to the true meaning of morality, the nature of which is to be always obligatory, whether enforced or not, and resolves altruism back into egoism. It follows, therefore, that hedonism can give no satisfactory explanation of moral obligation (§ 58).

III. What view of obligation and moral law is assumed in the Intuitionist Theory?

§ 89. III. We consider next what view of obligation will be implied in the *Intuitionist* view of the judgment and standard adopted above. This view, especially when taken in connection with the Idealist explanation, which is only another aspect of the same, will be found to supply the most adequate explanation of moral obligation.

That the relation of rightness and obligation is analytical.

According to this account, then, moral rightness is a quality which can be discerned intuitively as inherent in the form of an action, when considered in relation to its circumstances; and consists essentially in a harmony of relation which immediately satisfies the reason as supplying an essential want, and as being, therefore, *right in itself*; and, through the intellectual approval of reason, gives rise to an emotion of approval and satisfaction, independent of all thought of antecedent command and consequent sanctions of reward or punishment.

Now it is evident that, if command and will

are not necessary to make action right, they can not be necessary to make it obligatory either. And that, as the rightness lies in the very nature of the actions, so the obligatoriness must rise out of the nature of the actions also, and be independent of commands, rewards and punishment. The relation of obligatoriness to rightness will be an *analytical* one.

Rightness  
contains  
obligation.

It will follow from this, then, that rightness and obligatoriness will be only two names for, or only two aspects of, the same thing; or two correlative qualities such that the one cannot be without the other. An action will be *obligatory simply because it is right*. —

§ 90. But how, then, does this essential obligatoriness of what is right make itself *felt by us*? How does the idea of obligation arise, and how does it impose itself upon us as a motive-force, binding or impelling us to do what is right? For psychology can recognise no mental motive-force which does not rise out of some want, and manifest itself in some feeling.

But how  
does the  
obligatori-  
ness of right  
actions  
manifest  
itself to our  
conscious-  
ness?

We answer that obligation is a case of cognition and understanding rising into emotion, and through emotion into desire, self-determination and conation, and includes therefore *intellectual, emotional*, and, we may add, *conative* elements. Thus—

The con-  
sciousness of  
obligation  
includes—

(1) We discern and understand what the agent's relations are or were before the action, and what they are or will be after and in consequence of the action. And we discern and understand a certain unfitness or discord in his relations before and without the action, and a certain harmony and

(1) An intel-  
lectual ele-  
ment—a  
cognition  
of present  
or future  
discord of  
relations and



the necessity  
of action to  
restore  
harmony ,

equilibrium of relations which the action has restored or will restore. And in this maintenance or restoration of harmony, we discern intellectually the *rightness* of the action, and at the same time the *need* that there is or was, therefore, for the performance of the action—*viz.*, to maintain or restore that fitness of relation in which the life of the individual and of society consists.

This cognition by the agent, of the *need* or indispensableness of the action (*i. e.*, of the change of relations which it brings about), and of the dependence of this adjustment of relations upon himself, is the intellectual and rational *basis* of the consciousness of obligation. The action is obligatory on the agent, because it is necessary to his right relations with his fellow men, and therefore to his own worth and dignity and position in the commonwealth of rational beings—*i. e.*, it is morally, though not physically necessary. Obligation, therefore, like rightness rests upon a direct cognition of *objective truth*.

(2) An emotional element—affection of the whole system by this cognition of wrongness of relation .

(2) But, as in other cases, the thought surrounds itself in the agent's mind with emotion—with a feeling of dissatisfaction with himself, of insufficiency, inferiority and shame, a consciousness of falling below himself, and being unworthy of his function in the world, so long as he fails to overcome the need ; and with a feeling, consequently, of approval and preference for the action, and ideal anticipation of the shame and remorse which will follow in consequence of not performing it.

(3) Consequent impulse to restore harmony of relation.

These feelings constitute the emotional elements of the consciousness of obligation.

(3) And this feeling of dissatisfaction with the present or anticipated position of the self rises naturally into a state of *desire* and *yearning* to overcome or avoid this imperfect state, and thereby

into an *impulse* or *incipient tendency* towards the action needed for so doing: and this impulse, confirmed and strengthened by the fundamental intellectual conviction of its rightness, constitutes the motive and binding force of obligation.

The consciousness begins, therefore, with a conviction in the agent's mind that the action contemplated is included within his function as a man among men, and is essential to the completeness and perfection of his own nature; and this conviction, rising into emotion, tends to constrain and determine the agent to identify himself with that end and action for the time being. Now it is *this constraining and determining force which the idea of the good exercises over the mind of the agent, that constitutes the force of obligation.* But to be constrained and determined by the idea of the highest good is self-determination. In other words, such constraint and determination is self-imposed, because it is self that conceives and imposes upon self the highest good of self. Moral obligation and freedom of will necessarily go together, and it is the very nature of moral obligation to be freely *self-imposed*.

Thus in moral obligation the self feels itself *bound by its own idea, conviction and feeling* of what is wanting to its own position in relation to the rest of the world, and, therefore, to its own nature. But this is equivalent to saying that it feels itself bound by *itself* to act so and so, and not by any external force.

In short, the consciousness of obligation, is grounded ultimately in intellectual intuition and apprehension of what is right and good; but this

Hence in obligation the self feels constrained by its conviction and feeling of what is essential to its own nature

That is, it feels constrained by itself for its own good.

## PRINCIPLES OF MORAL SCIENCE.

conception of the good affects the whole system, and thereby rises into emotion and desire, and thence into self-determination or volition.

And these, the essential constituents of obligation, are supplemented by the mass of acquired feelings and tendencies which utilitarian thinkers have described and analysed (§ 53). These are psychologically real, and constitute the results of moral education. But they do not themselves constitute conscience and obligation, as utilitarians assume; but are really products of a process of moral training to which conscience and obligation give the impulse.

The force of acquired habits co-operates with that of moral obligation, but must not be confounded with it.

This, then, is what we mean when we say that we are under a moral obligation, or, bound by duty to act so and so, independently of external law and rewards and punishments from without. These have nothing to do with the making of moral rightness or obligation. The idea of obligation gives rise indeed, we shall find, to the idea of *deserving* reward or punishment—of good or ill desert—but it is not the hope of the one or the fear of the other that *makes* the obligation.

“From the eternal and necessary differences of things there naturally and necessarily arise certain obligations which are of themselves incumbent on all rational creatures, antecedent to all positive institution and to all expectation of reward and punishment” (Clarke).

§ 91. The question may be raised, however, whether all right actions are obligatory in the same sense and degree. Is it my duty to plunge into the river to save a drowning child, in the same sense as it is my duty to do my daily work, and fulfil my contracts? This question has given rise to the distinction between *perfect* and *imperfect*, *determinate* and *indeterminate* obligations. The distinction has been stated vaguely and variously by different writers, but the following are the most essential points.—

But most moralists make a distinction between two kinds or degrees of obligation.

(a) Some right actions are in fulfilment of definite *contracts* or mutual understandings, whether explicit or only understood. In such cases failure to perform them would not only be morally wrong, but would expose the person to definite censure and punishment, legal and social. The duty, therefore, of performing such actions is said to be *perfect* or *determinate*; and indeed the word duty is often limited to obligations that are determinate in this sense. But though the failure to perform this class of obligations involves the greatest degree of demerit, and entails the strongest censure, yet the performance of them carries with it the lowest degree of positive merit. When Nelson issued his signal: England expects every man to do his duty, he was making, it has been said, the smallest demand that could have been made under the circumstances. There is little merit in merely fulfilling one's contracts, paying one's debts and doing one's duty in this narrower sense.

(1) Perfect obligations, consisting in the fulfilment of contracts.

Enforced by fear of punishment.

(b) But some right actions *go beyond all definite contract* and mutual understanding, and no definite punishment, either political or social, can be imposed for their omission, so that they are performed solely for the satisfaction of doing what is good. We are not bound by any definite contract to any one, to be benevolent, generous, grateful, patient or self-sacrificing; and we are not prosecuted, nor excommunicated from society for failing to be such. In such cases the obligation is only *indeterminate* or *imperfect*. Thus to pay a debt is one thing, and to jump into the river to save a child from the jaws of a crocodile, or to give a thousand pounds for the support of a hospital, is another thing;

(2) Imperfect obligations where there is no contract, and no obvious reward or punishment.

and the obligation in the two cases differs in kind and degree. Benevolence is not a duty, it is said, in the same sense as justice, honesty and veracity.

Yet the imperfect class have most moral merit.

And yet the latter class of duties, it is admitted, though indeterminate in the above sense, and unsupported by the ordinary external sanctions, are of higher moral *worth* and *merit* than the former. There is more merit in risking one's life for the good of others than in merely paying one's debts and fulfilling contracts.

The term duty sometimes restricted to the one class, and virtue to the other.

Some, indeed, would restrict the idea of *duty* and *obligation* altogether to the first of the above classes of actions, and the ideas of *virtue* and *merit* to the second. The distinctive mark of duty is that it is fixed by contract, and that we are censured or punished for not doing it; and that of virtue is that it "lies in what is beyond duty," and is purely optional and free. The fields of rightness and duty are two concentric circles, that of rightness being the wider of the two. Outside the circle of duty lies a large free field, which is the domain of virtue and positive merit, but not of duty. A distinction is thus created between *optional* and *obligatory* morality.

But this distinction, more legal than moral.

It will be seen, however, that this distinction belongs more to the ethics of the political and social standards and sanctions, than to morals in the proper sense.

From a moral point of view there is surely contradiction in saying, that we can transcend our obligation, and do more than our duty, and earn moral merit by doing what it is not our duty to do. The higher merit, in the proper moral sense of the

word, should surely go with the fulfilment of the higher obligation and duty. What gives the greater merit must surely be the higher duty.

And it is to be borne in mind that the legal and social obligations created by contract and sanctions do not take away nor lessen the purely *moral* obligation of fulfilling them; and the good man fulfils them not from fear of punishment if he do not, but from his consciousness of the rightness of so doing. Therefore, from a purely moral point of view, there is both virtue in the determinate class, and duty in the indeterminate.

Akin to the above is the distinction sometimes made between *definite* and *indefinite* obligations and duties. A duty is said to be definite when it is towards a particular person and enjoins a particular action, as the fulfilment of a contract or an act of justice. It is indefinite when it enjoins a certain class of actions, but leaves the agent free as to the particular actions, and the particular persons towards whom they are to be performed. Thus benevolence is obligatory, but only in the general and indefinite sense, because we are left free to exercise it in any way, and towards any person that we like.

A distinction also made between definite and indefinite duties.

§ 92. Some moralists, however, while accepting the intuitionist view of the *faculty* and *standard*, are not satisfied with the purely intuitionist view of *moral obligation*—which makes it dependent wholly on intuition of inherent rightness and the sentiments rising out of it (as explained above); and think that, though the rightness of actions, and, to a certain extent, their obligatoriness are perceived intuitively, yet external command and sanctions of reward and punishment are necessary in addition, to make the obligation practically and effectively *binding*, even as moral law. In other words, the obligation which rises *analytically* out of intuitive

Consider in Smith's view rightness is objective

View of Martineau and some others, that the obligation which is inherent in rightness is insufficient, and must be supplemented by law and legal sanctions.

rightness of conduct is not sufficient of itself, but requires to be supplemented *synthetically* by the binding and impelling force of personal command, supported by rewards and punishments. This is the opinion of Martineau.

How, then, is this supplementary binding force to be accounted for ?

Inherent  
rightness  
and obliga-  
tion perceiv-  
ed directly.

But these  
imply and  
suggest  
indirectly a  
person to  
whom obli-  
gation is  
due, and who  
commands  
its fulfil-  
ment.

In this way according to Martineau.—Conscience, in giving us a cognition of right and wrong <sup>and of the obligatoriness of right-doing,</sup> gives us also a conviction of our being responsible for our action to some superior external power, and an expectation and certainty of being rewarded and punished by that external power. In other words, our conscience gives us (1) an intuitive perception that such and such forms of conduct are right, and that we are therefore under an obligation to do them. It is thus admitted that rightness necessarily involves some kind of obligation, and that their relation is thus far analytical. But (2) the consciousness of obligation necessarily involves and carries with it the idea of a superior personal being to whom the obligation is due, and to whom we are responsible for its performance, and from whom, therefore, we are liable to receive punishment or reward ; and without this additional impelling force the obligation would be felt to be incomplete.

Thus a second kind of obligation is added on synthetically to the former, *viz.*, the obligation created by the will of this superior power. "The bindingness of moral rules must emanate from another person. The moral law is imposed by an authority foreign to our personality, and is open not to be canvassed, but only to be obeyed or disobeyed."

Who, then, is the person to whom obligation is ultimately due, and to whom we are responsible? Who is this ultimate source of moral authority, whose approval and disapproval is the ultimate motive for right doing?

Who then is this person, who is the ultimate source of moral authority?

It is not any of our fellowmen, (neither government nor society), because only a small part of our moral life comes under the cognisance of men, and only a small part of our duties are due to them, and only few of our actions are rewarded or punished by them. Therefore, the person whom conscience implies as the person to whom all obligation is ultimately due, must be an *omnipresent* and *omniscient* person, viz., *God*.

Thus the intuition of rightness involves, indeed, that of obligation, but obligation necessarily implies a person to whom all obligation is ultimately due, and to whom we are responsible; and that person can only be God. And thus our conscience or moral faculty is one of the forces which suggest and force upon us the idea of, and belief in God.

It must be God.

According to this view, therefore, though obligatoriness is in some sense inherent in the very nature of rightness, as rightness is inherent in the very nature of the action; yet this inherent obligation would not supply a sufficient motive-force to impel men to right-doing, if it were not supplemented by that other kind of obligation which is produced by personal command, and external sanctions of reward and punishment from a superior power. Thus Martineau seems to combine, somewhat inconsistently, the intuition theory of the judgment and the quality judged, with the legal theory of external rewards and punishments as the principal ground of obligation. It is evident, however, that making obligation depend so far on external reward and punishment (apart from the incoherence, if not inconsistency, of these two explanations of obligation) is equivalent

This, however, is a somewhat incoherent combination of three theories—intuitional, legal and utilitarian.



to introducing an element of egoistic utilitarianism, which is opposed to real morality.

Indeed some separate obligation altogether from rightness, and make obligation depend wholly on divine law.

Some, however, have gone even further than this, and, while admitting that what is right is right independently of all will, have yet maintained that there would be no obligation whatever to do what is right, if it were not commanded by God. In other words, though rightness is absolute, obligation must be created by will. But surely there is contradiction in supposing that actions can be right in themselves without being for that reason obligatory in themselves. Whatever makes rightness, must thereby make obligation at the same time.

The view of obligation implied in the Idealist system is practically the same as in the Intuitional.

§ 93. IV. Finally, as to the view of obligation involved in the theory which makes the standard of moral rightness to be *self-realization*, or the attainment of perfect life. We deal with this theory last because it both supposes, and supplies the completion and explanation of the view implied in the intuitional account.

For external harmony of conduct

For according to the intuitional view, we perceive rightness and wrongness as something inherent in the *forms* of actions, *vis.*, as the harmony and discord of relations brought about by them; and in so doing we can see that, by the very nature of things, it is obligatory on every rational being to act in such a way as to maintain the harmony of relations in which both individual and social life consist—to act in such a way “that the rule according to which he acts may be accepted as a rule of action by all rational beings.” To perceive the difference between right and wrong, all that is necessary is to consider the circumstances and changes of relation brought about by the action.

Implies inner harmony of nature.

But there is another aspect of the question. The harmony of relations thus brought about is the external manifestation of an inner reality, *vis.*, of harmony in the nature of the agent. That outward harmony is good in itself, but is at the same time the condition and means of another good, *vis.*,

of the *essential perfection of the agent*, which is the deepest aspect of the good.

Hence the idealist statement of the standard, that it is the ultimate perfection of the rational self, is in no way inconsistent with the intuitional one, that it consists in a harmony of relations between rational beings; but rather supplies the true meaning and philosophical explanation of the latter.

What, then, will be the meaning of obligation from the idealist point of view?—(i) Supposing that we have such an ideal of the perfect self before our minds, and that we apply this ideal as a standard by which to judge our actions (*viz.*, by deducing their rightness or wrongness from that ideal as premiss), then this will lead us to much the same view of obligation as the intuitional theory. What makes us feel under an obligation to act so and so, will be the cognition, conviction and feeling that *it is necessary to act so if we are to fulfil the requirements of our nature—to realize the potentialities of spiritual life and worth which are latent in it*; and that failure to act so will be to the detriment of our own essential nature, and therefore of our highest good.

(ii) And this view of obligation will supply us with an answer to the other question: To whom is obligation ultimately due? If the ultimate standard be the Highest Good, and the Highest Good consist in the self-realization and perfection of rational life as an end in itself, then *the obligation will ultimately be towards rational life as expressed in the system of rational minds, and therefore towards self as an embodiment of that spiritual life which is common to all rational minds*. For, as this same nature is common to self with all rational beings,

It is our own conviction of our own highest essential good that impels and binds us to right conduct.

And makes the self impose obligation of right conduct upon itself, as its duty towards itself.

and as the full possible perfection of the nature of self can be realized only in co-operation with other rational beings in a spiritual organism of minds, we may say that the obligation is due not to ourselves as isolated individuals merely, but ultimately to the essential spiritual nature within us, which we have in common with other rational beings.

And as the perfection of self, to be truly essential, must be *self-realized*, therefore the obligation must be *self-imposed obligation*—obligation imposed by the self upon the self, as being felt essential to the perfect being of self.

The idealist system, therefore, assumes an understanding of the self's place and function in the system of rational beings.

§ 94. Hence this view assumes (1) that we are able to take a comprehensive view of the whole system of rational beings in general, with their relations to, and dependence upon each other; and thereby to form some conception of what such a spiritual organism or society should be, and what we ourselves should be in order to be perfect members of this perfect social organism of rational minds. In other words, that we are able by effort of reason to form an ideal conception of what we must do and become, in order to realize fully *all the possibilities of perfection* which are latent in our human nature, and to be perfect organs of a perfect spiritual organism.

And of its own highest essential good as a factor of the system.

(2) And that being thus able to form a conception of a perfectly realized spiritual being—an ideal of personal perfection—we see intuitively that such an ideal is the *highest good* and therefore the *highest end* of effort to every rational being, so that effort and conduct will be good and right in proportion as it is conducive to this highest end or good.

(3) And that having formed a conception of this

ideal self as the highest possible good, the individual compares his own present self with the ideal, discerns and feels his want, and *imposes the filling up of the want, the realization of the ideal, upon himself* as his obligation and duty towards his own self, or the rational nature which is the essence of himself.

And its ability to determine its own activities as means towards that good.

Hence it is the very nature of moral obligation to be *self-imposed*—imposed by self upon self. Obligations imposed from without, as commands and laws, are forces of compulsion or constraint—not of *moral* obligation. It is self that imposes upon self the moral law—"act in such a way as to make the essential rational nature within you the ultimate end of your action"—or, "act so as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, always as an end, and never as a means only"—or, "act in such a way that the rule according to which you act may be fit to be adopted as a rule by all rational beings."

And moral law is by its very nature self-imposed.

And the sanction (if it be necessary to speak of sanction in connexion with this system) will be simply the internal self-satisfaction which must follow on the filling up of the most fundamental and essential want—the attainment of the highest end and good—of our nature, and the dissatisfaction of failing to do so. External rewards and punishments will be regarded as non-moral, prudential, egoistic motives, prompting people indeed to do or not to do things, but not making any difference to their essential nature and character. Rewards may indeed help to fill up the wants of the body, but not those of the soul itself. These can be filled up only by self-realization of the soul from within.

And the only sanction that can be recognised as moral, is the intuitional sanction of the good conscience.

"They who have not the law (command of a higher power) and yet do by nature the things contained in the law, they are a law unto them-

selves, their conscience bearing witness, and accusing or excusing them."

But the above account of moral judgment and obligation may be objected to as being too intellectualist in its tendency.

§ 95. But it may be argued that the above explanation of obligation (intuitional and idealist) attaches far greater importance to reason and thought in ethical life, than really belongs to them—that life is governed by *spontaneous* and *instinctive tendencies far more than by deliberate reason and thought*—and yields too much, therefore, to the Socratic and Platonic tendency to identify *virtue* with *knowledge*. This objection arises from the *automatist* or so-called *voluntarist* tendency in mental science already referred to (§ 1).

How, then, are we to understand the relation between the binding and impelling motive-force of moral obligation and the primary *spontaneous and instinctive* impulses, and tendencies of action—between *obligation* and *instinctive impulse*? This has been a ground of difference even among intuitional moralists themselves.

The meaning of this question may be illustrated from the moral feelings and impulses which we see in children.

For moral feelings are strong in children, antecedent to thought.

Thus, as soon as children understand language, their friends tell them stories for their entertainment. Now from the beginning they never fail to show sympathy with those persons of the story who act with justice and benevolence; and indignation against cruelty, greed and selfishness—the pitiless tyrant, the harsh step-mother, the usurping uncle of the stories. Sentiments of pity, sorrow, joy, love, indignation, together with moral approval and disapproval, spring up in their minds as the story proceeds. How, then, are these moral feelings to be accounted for? Two answers seem to be possible. It may be said that they spring up by an instinctive impulse, antecedent to, and independent of any

antecedent moral judgment; and that, if any such judgment come in, it is as a consequence and effect of these feelings, and not as their ground and cause. It may rather be, however, that these feelings are sentiments produced *by* thought, rather than automatically by sensations preceding thought; and that they have their ground in antecedent moral judgment of right and wrong, goodness and badness, in the characters of the story. Or, that, if the feelings are due in some degree to instinctive impulse, these instinctive tendencies originated in the moral judgments of our ancestors.

(a) Thus some have regarded moral judgment as based on a passive feeling which rises in us in connection with certain actions *instinctively*, and obligation as an *instinctive impulse* to do the actions which excite these feelings. Thus, as the lower springs of action are instinctive impulses towards the forms of action which satisfy them, so moral obligation is the ruling and regulating *instinct*, which impels and binds us to choose the better, and avoid the worse among these lower instinctive impulses. Reason and thought are not motive-forces, and can do nothing to determine the course of action. But mind is a "casket of stirring instincts," and instinct makes feeling rise and deepen into desire, and pass over into action.

Thus it is instinctive tendencies latent in the child's mind that makes the above feelings of approval or indignation rise; and if he can be said to pronounce moral judgment at all on the characters of the story, it is these instinctive feelings that prompt the judgment.

This tendency of thought is obvious even in the moral sense writers, such as Hutcheson and Martineau; but it leads obviously to the *automatist* or so-called *voluntarist* view of mind, which these writers themselves certainly did not contemplate.

(b) This view, however, seems to be based on a

Hence it is argued that the feelings of moral approval and obligation are primitive, instinctive impulses, antecedent to all judgment, and make judgment instead of being made by it.

But against this we maintain that reason and judgment are much deeper and more fundamental than the automatist theory admits.

misunderstanding of the relation of reason and thought to conation. It may be true that reason does not determine will directly; but it does it through the medium of emotion. The cognition of truth affects the whole mental and bodily system, changing the prevailing state of emotion, or producing a new one. And emotion thus rising out of thought determines the whole mental attitude, and rises into desire, and thereby into will. Thus thought determines the feelings and desires which determine volition. But in moral judgment, the thought which thus determines desires and volition is the idea of what reason discerns to be the highest good of the self. And to say that the self is determined by its own idea of its highest good, is to say that it is self-determined, because it freely identifies itself with its highest good. Thus, moral conduct is not determined by blind instinctive impulse, but by self through thought and reason.

It is true that this determination of the system of impulses and desires through reason, is an end attained only through development, and not fully attained in all. Animals are determined by instincts and impulses operating automatically. Many human beings never rise wholly above this condition, or sink back into it again. But the healthy moral self rises into, and perfects the power of self-determination through reason and thought.

And that reason underlies all moral judgment and sentiment, and that judgment makes the feeling instead of being made by it.

The relation of moral judgment and obligation to the automatic impulses is therefore this.—The living being naturally strives towards its own preservation and self-realization. In the lower forms of life the direction of development is determined in a spontaneous and instinctive way towards the creature's good. But in man the good rises into consciousness as idea, and through idea into desire

and volition, and thereby into *self*-realization.

Thus the function of conscious reason is to regulate, modify, and to some extent to make over again the tendencies originally instinctive and automatic, and turn them in new directions so as to attain more complete and adequate realization of the self. In this way it tends to reduce the springs of action to a hierarchy of higher and lower, working in harmony for one supreme end.

We conclude, therefore, that, though there may be instinctive tendencies in the child's mind to approve and disapprove, love and hate the characters of the stories, yet the direction, if not the very existence of these tendencies, has been determined by moral judgment of good and bad.

Hence instinct is supplemented and superseded by reason.

§ 96. We have found that the **XXV. Duties and Virtues.** outward changes of relation which actions produce are morally good or bad only in so far as they realize the motive and intention of the agent; and that the intention springs out of, and expresses the inner and essential nature of the agent. Thus we find that the innermost and ultimate seat of moral goodness is the rational mental principle itself, which manifests its qualities in free actions. "There is nothing without qualification good in heaven or in earth except a good will."

Right actions may be regarded from two points of view—that of their external results, and that of the mental nature which gives rise to them.

Hence right actions may be regarded from two points of view. They may be regarded from the side of their intended results, and thus far *objectively*. Regarded from this side, they will be *duties*, *i.e.*, those changes of relation which it is one's duty to produce, or the production of which is *due* by one. Or they may be regarded from the side of

Considered as results in conformity with moral law, they are duties.



Considered as inclinations, or dispositions of mind, they are virtues

the mind which manifests itself in them, and therefore *subjectively*. From this subjective point of view, the classes of actions may be identified with the mental inclinations, and dispositions out of which they arise, and spoken of as virtues, or manifestations of virtue.

Hence duties, the different classes of action required by moral law.

Virtue, the general disposition of the self to adapt its actions to moral law, or the conformity of its nature with the moral ideal

The duties, therefore, may be described, in a general way, as those actions and classes of action which are necessary for conformity with the standard of moral goodness, and therefore morally obligatory; and *virtue* (in the singular) will be that in the essential nature of the self—that fundamental disposition or inclination—which is manifested in the self's tendency to determine its actions in conformity with the standard of moral goodness; while the *virtues* (in the plural) will be that same fundamental disposition manifesting itself in the different classes of actions in conformity with moral goodness; e.g., the *virtues* of justice, liberality, courage will be *virtue* manifesting itself in the classes of action called just, liberal, brave.

But consider how this disposition originates and what is implied in it

§ 97. But we attain a more concrete statement and clearer understanding of virtue, if we consider *what it is in the self* that leads it to determine thus its actions in conformity with duty or moral law, or *how the general disposition so to do originates*; and this can be understood through the following considerations.—

All actions are means towards the realization of some ideal end.

(a) All rational action is action for the realization of desired ends. The desired end is a *good* present in idea, but absent in reality. It corresponds, therefore, to a want, need, incompleteness or imperfection in the nature and life of the agent.

Hence desire and motive rise out of a consciousness of want and imperfection, and involve an incipient impulse to fill up the deficiency (as air and water tend to fill up a vacuity) by attaining the desired good.

(b) But wants and needs will be present or future, temporary or permanent, natural or acquired, real or illusory; and the goods corresponding to them will be of lower and higher value accordingly. And the highest good will be correlative to the deepest and most essential and comprehensive want of our nature, which will include all other wants within it, as the highest good includes all other goods under it (as means needed for the realization of itself as ultimate end). And the right regulation of life will consist in the subordinating of artificial, temporary, unreal wants to permanent and essential ones—superficial and apparent goods to real and substantial ones—and all lower auxiliary ends to the one ultimate and fundamental one.

(c) And the highest function of mind will consist in the rational power of discerning what is ultimately good, and distinguishing between lower and higher forms of good; which will carry along with it, again, both the emotional capacity of being affected and moulded throughout one's whole nature by the conception of the good, and the consciousness of the obligation to identify the activity of one's life with the realization of the good. And this rational comprehension of what is ultimately and essentially good in life, with the modification which it produces of the whole mental system, will constitute, or give rise to a general disposition of the self to identify its active life with those ends and lines of action

But ends are good and bad according as they lead to higher or lower phases of being—towards good or towards evil.

Virtue supposes, therefore, the power of understanding, and freely identifying one's active life with the good.

which are necessary to the harmony and perfection of life and the realization of the good. And this general disposition will be *virtue*.

For the good, Plato taught, is at the same time the beautiful; and to the beautiful, when fully comprehended and felt, rational mind, by its very nature, voluntarily surrenders itself; and it is in this power of comprehension and voluntary surrender to the good that virtue consists.

Hence we can understand virtue as the general disposition and inclination rising out of the above cognition and affection.

Thus, considering the subject from this point of view, we are able to fill up our former statement of the meaning of virtue, and understand *virtue* as that fundamental disposition of the self which rises out of the intuition and conception of what is good; and which manifests itself in the general tendency freely to identify one's life in all its details with the realization of the good, and to regulate all the activities of life in conformity with the standard of the good. This description will remain the same whether the good be thought of proximately as that harmony of relations among rational beings living together in society, which is the most obvious aspect of the good (the intuitionist statement); or as that essential perfection of being which philosophy finds to be the ultimate expression of the good (the idealist statement).

And the virtues, as its various applications and directions.

The *virtues*, therefore, will be so many branches or applications of *virtue*, i.e., inclinations to regulate the different classes of needs and desires, so as to make one's actions conformable to the harmony of relations on which life depends, and conducive to the highest good. And the *duties* will be these same actions and classes of action *objectively* considered—in other words, those changes of relation which are essential to the harmony of persons living together in society, and the production of which is necessary to the health and harmony of

the agent's own nature, and which are, therefore, *due* by the agent directly and externally to others, } but ultimately to his own nature, and to God as the ground of all.

*Vice*, on the other hand, will be the tendency to allow inessential wants to assume disproportionate importance, or to allow artificial wants to predominate over natural and fundamental ones, and to surrender the self to their control. The vicious inclinations, therefore, being towards ends either unreal, or out of proportion to the real and essential needs of rational being, lead the self into other lines of development than the lines of highest self-realization, and consequently to the loss of self-control and rational freedom, to degeneration and the degradation of the self to the animal level, or to death.

§ 98. Hence virtue will suppose a power of recognising and understanding the needs of rational beings, and the goods or means by which they may be overcome; and of distinguishing between what is natural and acquired, superficial and essential, higher and lower in wants and desires; and of understanding the changes of relations and circumstances required in the fulfilment of these needs; and of discerning and feeling the supreme need of co-operation and harmony of all individual minds, in order to supply the wants and realize thereby the essential perfection of rational being. These powers are evidently to be included under the common name of *reason*; and hence those writers are justified who have spoken of moral faculty as an application, and moral judgment as a function of reason.

While vice will be the tendency to identify one's activity with lower ends, leading to development in wrong directions, and thereby to degeneration of the self.

The above account of virtue is an intellectualist one, making the disposition in which virtue consists to spring out of cognition and understanding.

In describing virtue and the virtues, however, two opposite tendencies of opinion can be distinguished, corresponding to the distinction between the *intellectualist* and the *voluntarist* (automatist) views of

mind already indicated in dealing with obligation, (§ 97).

This however is denied by the so-called voluntarist school, who reduce moral judgment and volition to automatic impulse.

(a) One tendency is to regard virtue as an *instinctive impulse* to follow certain lines of action rather than others. This tendency may be combined with a moral sense view of the faculty and judgment. Mind is so constituted (whether by creation or by spontaneous modification and natural selection) that certain actions affect it with an agreeable feeling of approval, and others with a disagreeable feeling of dislike. This is the ground of moral judgment. And it is so constituted at the same time that it tends spontaneously towards those lines of action which excite in it the agreeable feeling of approval, and away from those of the contrary kind. The objection to this is that it makes virtue to be a matter of constitution and blind inclination, and supposes the *heteronomy* of will.

(b) The opposite tendency is to regard mind in its highest phases as guided by *idea*, instead of blind instinctive impulse. Hence, in the case of virtue, it is supposed that mind is able to form a general idea of what is good—both what is good in the external relations of men; and what is good internally in the essential nature of men; and is able to regulate its actions in conformity with the good—not by blind impulse, but from the consciousness that it is good. This is the view implied in the *autonomy* of will, and is the one assumed above.

Thus classes of virtues will correspond to classes of external relations and internal needs.

§ 99. A classification of the virtues and duties, therefore, will correspond *objectively* to the different classes of relation which require to be harmonized; and *subjectively* to the fundamental wants, needs, and imperfections of the self, and consequently to the natural springs of action, motives and desires. Now these needs may be classified in a rough way into *self-regarding*, *other-regarding*, and *ideal-regarding*. We may, therefore, enumerate and distinguish the following classes of virtues and duties, accord-

ing to the different natural springs of action. This classification will be a classification of *virtues* in so far as we think of the *inward impulse* out of which the actions spring; and of *duties* in so far as we think of the *external results* or changes of relation aimed at:—

A. *The Self-regarding Virtues and Duties*—will be the voluntary inclinations or tendencies of the self to regulate its conduct in the filling up of the wants of its own physical system, and derivative wants rising out of these (such as the love of wealth, power, rank), in such a way as to maintain the harmony of relations between ourselves and other persons, and to make all these lower needs subordinate to the highest physical and mental perfection of our nature. Actions rising out of these virtues will be duties directly to ourselves, but indirectly also to society; because the good of society depends on the good of every individual worker entering into it, the ultimate good being common. This class may be included under the common name of *self-control*, and will comprise:—

*Temperance*—the power of resisting the impulses of appetite, so as to check and control them in the way most consistent with, and most conducive to the health and strength of the bodily organism—as being essential to the well-being also of mind and soul, and to our usefulness as members of society.

This duty is in the first instance, therefore, to ourselves, but indirectly to others; because we can not do our work in the world without being healthy in body and mind, and temperance is a necessary condition of both bodily and mental health.

But can be defined most conveniently with reference to the latter.

A. Hence the first class will be those regulating the self's needs connected with its own physical self-preservation and well-being, such as—

*Temperance.*

Courage. • *Courage*—the power of resisting the impulses of fear and pain, when it is beneficial to our life on the whole to undergo present pains and dangers for greater future benefits and the realizing of higher and more permanent ends. (Courage will have a place, however, in the class of other-regarding virtues also, because pain and danger have often to be incurred for others).

Industry. *Industry and perseverance*—the power of resisting present desires of ease and temporary gratification in order to apply one's bodily and mental powers to the production (by means of labour) of what will be permanently beneficial in the future.

Thrift. *Thrift*—the power of resisting the temptation to use in present temporary gratifications what, if preserved and combined, might be a source of greater and more permanent and essential benefit in the future.

Included under rational self-love, or self-love guided by reason, and therefore consistent with the good of others. The above are included under what has been called *prudence* or rational *self-love*, i.e., regard for the good of self considered in abstraction from that of others (though it can be shown that the two goods—that of self and that of others—are ultimately identical, so that some have tried to reconcile egoism with altruism by showing that there is not a single duty to one's self which is not a duty towards others at the same time).

Vice, the degradation of self-love— Indulgence towards self. The corresponding *vices* will include (1) the tendencies directly opposed to the above—self-indulgence, faint-heartedness, indolence, fickleness, and wastefulness—which are equivalent to *degeneration* of the self, and loss of the power of free self-development. Such tendencies have been spoken of as the "private vices," because their

outward effects concern most directly the self, and others only indirectly. For this reason, also, the external sanctions of rewards and punishments, political and social, have but little application here. The law of "natural selection," however, interferes to weed out the degenerate self-indulgent more effectually than artificial sanctions could do. The fallacy of the old paradox that "private vices are public benefits" is easily exposed.

(2) And many tendencies rising out of these, but involving injury to other persons more directly than these do, and included under the general name of *selfishness*—such as greed, ingratitude, envy, cruelty, jealousy, and exaggerated forms of ambition.

Sinking into selfishness towards others.

And, indeed, it seems probable that all the vices are degenerate forms of *self-love*—doing evil to others or even to self for what appears to be good to self; as there can hardly be such a thing as love of evil for its own sake, *i.e.*, otherwise than as a means of supposed good to self.

Ancient Greek ethics turned largely upon the above self-regarding virtues, and this was partly (a) because the culture and development of the individual is the necessary condition of his efficiency as an organ of the commonwealth; and partly (b) because the ancients generally regarded the person as merely a product of the forces working in nature, so that to them the only end of man was to cultivate his latent powers in such a way as to make the present terrestrial life as tolerable and enjoyable as possible.

§ 100. B. *The Other-regarding, or Altruistic Virtues and Duties*—will be the tendencies, or permanent resolutions of the self to regulate its conduct in such ways as to be consistent with, and conducive to the well-being of other persons individually, or society collectively—those tendencies of the self which manifest themselves in fellow-feeling, sympathy and justice, and which suppose the power,

B. Another class will be those rising out of the needs of others as reproduced, understood and felt by the self, including—



on the part of the self, of representing, understanding, and feeling the needs of others. Here the duty is directly and consciously towards others, but indirectly, and perhaps unconsciously, towards ourselves also; because the good of others ultimately involves our own good, and it is only by identifying ourselves with other minds that the perfection of our own being can be attained. Under this division we may distinguish two subdivisions—

I. A group coming under the head of Justice.

I. That class of altruistic tendencies which may be regarded as so many applications and manifestations of Justice—the disposition or willingness to allow and secure for all individuals the possession, enjoyment, and disposal of the products of their own physical and mental labour, in fair proportion to the degree and quality of their labour. No individual can be morally good without the inclination to admit and delight in such fairness of distribution, and to be disgusted and horrified by any tendency in any rational being to interfere with it.

Fairness in the distribution of goods, and means of good, according to a principle.

For society could not exist without fairness in the distribution of the good things which are required to satisfy wants; and the distribution must be according to some principle, or rule, or standard; and the standard of distribution must be the quality and quantity of the work done in the production of the good things to be distributed. And, indeed, this fairness of distribution is the most obvious aspect of that harmony of relations among rational beings which appears to immediate intuition as the standard of moral rightness.

Justice manifests itself in many different forms in addition to its judicial or forensic one, to which

the above definition applies most directly, and of these we may mention—

*Candour* in thought and speech regarding others, or readiness to admit what is true even when it is to our own disadvantage ;

*Gratitude*, or tendency to feel and express our indebtedness to others in return, for benefits received from them ;

*Veracity*, or tendency to make our words agree with our thought, in conversation and testimony ;

*Honesty* and *fidelity*, or tendency to make our actions agree with our words in promises and contracts ;

*Equity* in the exercise of power and authority ; and

*Uprightness* and *Integrity* in allowing to others, so far as may be in our power, all the advantages to which they may have a right, and resisting all temptations to the contrary.

These, it can be seen, all have their ground in the idea and feeling of fairness or justice. But justice, as fairness of distribution, will include and necessitate retributive punishment, which is evil imposed to make up for, and counterpoise unfairly appropriated good—to restore the disturbed equilibrium of relations in which justice consists.

For, if fairness require that we should act so as to confer a certain good on another person, it requires also that, if we fail to do so or inflict evil instead, we should ourselves suffer a corresponding loss. In doing an unjust act, we are guilty of a "negation of right," Harmony of relations must be readjusted by a "negation of that negation." Injustice is a suspension by us of the rights of others, and must be met by a suspension of our own rights, and the suffering of a proportionate evil.

The utilitarian school, as might be expected,

There are many different applications of the fundamental idea of justice.

Hence, punishment is necessary as a factor of justice.

Though some say it is necessary only for prevention and reformation.

reject this *retributive* view of punishment,—that it is necessary by the very nature of things; and regard it as merely *preventive* and *reformatory*, i.e., necessary merely as (a) a counter-motive to outweigh temptations to wrong-doing, and make it to be for one's self-interest to act justly; and (b) as a force tending to suppress evil tendencies and promote beneficial habits in those on whom it is inflicted.

II. Another group coming under the head of Benevolence or Social Feeling.

II. That class of tendencies which spring out of *fellow-feeling*, *benevolence*, or altruistic feeling proper.—While justice is a comparatively *passive* disposition, merely *letting alone*, and allowing individuals to enjoy and dispose of what they can produce by their mental or physical labour, benevolence is a more positively *active* virtue. It supposes that chance, or gift of natural endowment, has thrown a larger proportion of the good things of the world into the hands of some persons than of others, in such a way that justice, as ordinarily understood and applied, cannot take any exception to this distribution. Hence there arises an unequal distribution of good things without violation of ordinary justice. It is here, then, that fellow-feeling or benevolence comes in to supplement justice. Those who thus fairly acquire more than is needed for their own wants, are prompted by feelings of sympathy to extend the surplus to relieve the wants of their less fortunate fellow beings.

There are many different forms of social feeling also.

Fellow-feeling has many branches or applications, and appears under many different names in the different relations of life. Thus we may distinguish—

Feelings arising from natural relations.

(a) Fellow-feeling towards those with whom we are *naturally* and *necessarily* connected by birth and circumstances—(1) Towards members of our own family—*parental affection*, filial piety,

brotherly love, and so on ; (2) Towards the people of our village, city or district—*friendship*, public-spirit, and so on ; (3) Towards our countrymen generally—*patriotism* ; (4) Towards our fellow-men generally—*humanity*, philanthropy.

(b) Fellow-feeling towards those with whom we have *voluntarily* connected ourselves—(1) Towards those with whom we have connected ourselves in business, and by special agreement—*honour* and *honesty* in their various forms ; (2) Towards the members of our society generally, independent of business relations—*politeness* (which has been called “kindness in small things”) ; (3) Towards the members of any organisation or party, religious or political, with which we have seen good to connect ourselves—*loyalty*, *esprit de corps* ; (4) Towards members of other parties than our own—*toleration* (Muirhead).

Feelings arising from artificial relations.

What, then, are we to regard as the ultimate relation between justice and benevolence ? Are we to say that the latter is something essentially distinct from the former, and supplementary, or that it is really but a deeper form of the same, taking wider and more essential relations into account ? Now we can see that justice regards the harmony of outward relations which is necessary to the order and health of society. But benevolence involves a consciousness of the ultimate identity of nature underlying all rational beings, and feeling for the good of all in common ; and therefore expresses a harmony of disposition which is deeper and more essential than the regard for outward harmony, commonly called justice. Therefore it is not really opposed to justice, but a deeper aspect and expression of the same thing.

There is difficulty as to the relation of benevolence to justice.

Is it distinct in nature and origin ?

Or only a higher form of the same ?

It has been debated whether benevolence is obligatory in the same sense as justice, and this

Is it obligatory in the same sense as justice?

It is morally, though not legally obligatory.

The most active and aggressive of the vices consist in the negation of the altruistic virtues.

question is the ground of the distinction between determinate and indeterminate obligation (§ 91). The truth is that some of the forms of justice are so definite in their nature, and so essential to the outward order of society, that they both can and must be enforced by political and legal penalties as a matter of social and political expediency. This cannot be the case with benevolence, nor indeed with all kinds of ordinary justice. It is this matter of expediency, rather than any moral difference, that has given rise to the distinction.

We have already considered the "private" vices, rising out of self-indulgence. But the most numerous and aggressive of the vices consist in the negation and antitheses of the altruistic virtues. We have found reasons for believing that self-love and altruism coincide in their ultimate results, *viz.*, in the Highest Good, which cannot be a good of one, but the common good of all. But though their ultimate results may coincide, this is not true of their immediate or proximate results, considered by themselves. Now some minds may not care to look beyond the immediate results of actions—their powers of inference and representation being limited, or their impulses of self-indulgence being so disproportionately strong as to hinder their powers of judgment and anticipation. Hence the numerous forms of evil rising out of selfishness, such as dishonesty, cruelty, fraud and murder. These, it will be seen, are less *passive* than the private vices, and involve more active self-determination, and hence entail not merely passive degeneration of the self, but active development in wrong directions. Hence the actively baneful characters with whom history abounds, who have sought to make their fellowmen only the instruments of their own gratifications.

Ancient Greek ethics, we have seen, concerned itself mainly with the cultivation of self by means of the self-regarding virtues such as temperance and fortitude. Of the other-regarding ones, it hardly rose higher than justice; benevolence was little thought of unless under the form of patriotism. It was fully recognised, however, by Buddha in the east. In the west its exaltation to the foremost place was due to Christianity.

Greek ethics promoted the self-regarding, Christian ethics the other regarding virtues.

Hence benevolence has been the fundamental virtue not only to modern altruistic hedonists, but also to many intuitionist thinkers. Virtue consists, they admit, in doing what is right because it is right in itself, and not for the sake of happiness. But as a matter of fact, some have thought, moral rightness does always coincide with conduciveness to happiness. "True virtue most essentially consists in benevolence to being in general. We look on a benevolent propensity to being in general as the beauty of the being in whom it is; excellency which renders him worthy of esteem, complacency and good will" (Jonathan Edwards). "If we examine all the actions counted amiable anywhere, and inquire into the grounds on which they are approved, we find that they always appear as benevolent, and flowing from good will to others, and a study of their happiness. The perfection of virtue is a universal calm good will towards all sensible natures" (Hutcheson).

Benevolence often made the fundamental virtue.

Not only by Hedonists.

But also by Intuitionists.

The above two classes of virtues and motives aim primarily, it can be seen, at proximate or intermediate ends and goods, especially at the means and materials of organization, and thereby at life and happiness. These are subordinate, however, as means to the fuller self-realization which is the ultimate good. The following class aims more directly at the ultimate good itself, *viz.*—

§ 101. C. *The Ideal-regarding or Non-personal Virtues and Duties.*—Thus far we have been supposing the proximate motives of conduct to be the preservation of harmonious relations among rational beings living together in society, and the

C. Another class rising out of the thought of perfection in

the abstract, without regard to particular persons or classes,—in which, therefore, the ideal standard becomes predominant.

promotion thereby of social order and of the welfare of particular persons, *viz.*, self and others. But such motives, if aimed at solely for their own sake, would be more utilitarian than moral in the higher sense. Happiness and even self-preservation are not ultimate ends in themselves, but only means towards a higher end, *viz.*, the development and perfection of human nature of which harmony of relations is but the outward manifestation.

Three forms of the Ideal—the True, the Beautiful and the Good.

Hence these self-regarding and other-regarding motives will be subordinate as means to the ultimate moral motive, which is the realization and perfection of rational being, and which is present to mind as an *ideal*. But in analysing the springs of action, we found the sentiments or ideal-regarding emotions to be of three kinds, and these will give three classes of virtues and duties pointing towards three forms of the Ideal—

Hence a class of virtues consisting in aspiration towards intellectual perfection.

(1) Aspiration towards the *Intellectual Ideal*, giving the virtue and duty of loving truth for its own sake. Every thinking being naturally longs to bring his thought into agreement with reality, and this craving is the love of truth—desire to attain and promote true thought. Under this class of motive, we may distinguish dispositions—

Tending towards enlightenment.

(a) Towards the pursuit and discovery of truth,—including Sincerity or the avoiding of all false pretences; Impartiality, or the subordinating of our own personal interests to truth; Concentration, or the resisting of all distracting tendencies for the time being;

(b) Towards the communication and dissemination of the truth,—including Truthfulness or Veracity, shrinking from deception and misrepresenta-

tion as inconsistent with our own higher nature ;

(c) Towards the applying of truth to regulate the practical activities of life, including its application—

And the regulation of life in subordination to the Highest Good.

(i) To the bettering of one's own life—giving the power and tendency to apply knowledge to the control of the self-regarding motives, thereby transforming self-love, and making it to be rational or reasonable self-love, or *Prudence* in the highest sense—aiming at the truest and most essential good of self, which will be found to be ultimately identical with the good of others ; and

Both in the lives of self.

(ii) To the bettering of the lives of all generally—giving *Wisdom*, or the power and tendency to consider and care for the highest good of all, thereby making benevolence to be rational—aiming at the truest and most essential good of others, which will be found to be ultimately identical with the highest good of self.

And those of others.

It is in this application of the highest known truth—the *idea* of the highest good—to the regulation of all our actions in subordination to the highest good, that freedom of will essentially consists. Hence the tendency of ancient thinkers such as Socrates and Plato to identify virtue ultimately with knowledge, *i.e.*, with the power of knowing, and thereby identifying one's life with the realization of the highest good.

(2) Aspiration towards the *Æsthetic* Ideal, giving the virtue and duty of loving and preferring what is beautiful in the world as an outward reflection of inward goodness of intention and design. It may be said, indeed, that the pursuit of the æsthetic ideal, or the beautiful, has nothing to do with morality, because, as commonly understood, it refers wholly to outward things, and is applied only in a

Another class, in aspiration towards the æsthetic ideal.



figurative way to character and conduct. But outward things are in a sense products and manifestations of mind, and reflect its inner character; and their perfection or harmony of form and order reacts undoubtedly upon the character of the mind which takes them in, and comprehends them.

Whence the Platonic theory of the ultimate identity of the good and the beautiful.

Indeed, Plato and some other thinkers have gone so far as to identify the Good with the Beautiful, and thereby moral with æsthetic sentiment. That inward harmony of the complex spiritual nature which we call moral goodness, and which manifests itself in outward harmony of conduct, is the ultimate ground also of that goodness of intention and design (end) which manifests itself in the order and harmony of nature, and which we call the beautiful. In other words, the beauty of the world is an outward reflection of spiritual goodness operating within and behind the world. Hence the power of being affected by and appreciating the beautiful, Plato supposed, both springs out of, and reacts on and promotes the essential goodness of one's nature.

Hence we must admit, to some extent at least, the truth of what has been written by Ruskin and many others, about the moral meaning and influence of art and the outwardly beautiful, and admit taste, or the power to understand and appreciate, and the disposition to promote the outwardly beautiful, among the virtues and duties.

But all virtue contained ultimately in aspiration towards

(3) Aspiration towards the *Volitional* Ideal or ideal of a perfect will, giving the virtue and duty of loving goodness for its own sake—the supreme virtue of *reverence* for the good, and the duty which includes all other duties—the aspiration towards the highest self-realization. For as will may be

said to be the very essence of our nature, as being the function to which all other functions are subsidiary, therefore perfection of "will" will be the highest realization of our nature—that to which the perfection and harmony of all the lower motives, egoistic, altruistic, intellectual and æsthetic, are subservient as means to end, and that which gives them all whatever moral worth they have.

essential goodness, which may be described as goodness of will.

Hence the happiness of self, the happiness of others, justice, knowledge, and wisdom, beautiful surroundings, may all be goods and ends of conduct ; but they are so only because they are manifestations of, or are more or less conducive, as means or conditions, to the higher and more comprehensive good which consists in the realization and perfection of our essential nature, which may be said to consist in our will. Goodness of will, Kant says, is the only thing which is good in itself and for its own sake, and not subordinate as a means to anything else.

Or as the perfect nature, which is the ultimate end and standard of conduct.

Hence, the highest and most purely moral motive for doing an action is the feeling that doing the contrary would put us out of harmony with our position in the world, and be inconsistent with the worth and dignity of our nature as rational beings, and tend to degrade us to a lower stage of being.

Therefore the ideal of a perfect will, *i.e.*, of an essentially perfect nature, will be the supreme moral motive—and the love of goodness of nature for its own sake, or simply because it is good, will be the supreme virtue. And the lower virtues will be virtues in the sense that they are subordinate and conducive to this highest end, and included as factors within this highest virtue.

But love of goodness is not a spring of action apart from other springs, but consists in the regulation of other springs, and gives all others their moral character.

Kant's paradox.

✓ Kant, indeed, went so far as to say that no action is really a *moral* action—right in the moral sense—unless it is performed solely for the sake of its rightness, and without intermixture of any other motive. But (i) this would deprive such actions as saving another person's life, or the mother's watching over the sick child, of all moral value, because in such actions the ultimate rightness of the action is hardly thought of. And (ii) it is to be remembered that rightness or obligatoriness is only an abstraction when considered apart from other motives. It is a *quality* of other motives, and manifests itself as a force or motive only in and through other motives. We can not act for *rightness* alone, as Kant assumes, but for some *right motive*. In other words, the motive contains always something more than the quality of rightness.

Relation of the standards.

We can see, then, that the subordinate virtues, temperance, justice, benevolence, are both good *in themselves*, and good as *means* to a deeper good. From the stand-point of the Intuitionist standard we regard them as good in themselves; and they are such as reflections of essential goodness of nature. From that of the Ideal standard, we regard them as means to an end; and they are such as promoting and confirming that inner and essential goodness. Thus we regard the Intuitionist as the "working" standard; the Ideal or Perfectionist, as the philosophical and ultimate one. ✓

The moral life supposes intercourse, co-operation and society of minds.

## XXVI. The Individual and Society.

§ 102. Virtue may, therefore, be said to consist in that mental disposition which manifests itself in harmony of relations among rational beings living and co-operating together in society for their own preservation and further per-

fection, and having, therefore, reciprocal rights and duties. Now this co-operation and harmony of relations makes the society or community of minds to have a kind of organic unity, and to be a kind of complex individual composed of many individuals, one integral life rising out of many individual lives, as the life of the organism rises by integration out of the individual lives of many cells; and it is only as a factor in this corporate life, and through harmony of co-operation with all other factors, that the individual mind can realize the potentialities inherent in its nature as mind. It is in this harmony of many minds, therefore, and this good which both manifests itself in, and can be realized only in and through such unity in plurality, and such harmony of many in one, that we look for the ultimate nature and meaning of morality.

This analogy between society and organism has frequently been overlooked, but sometimes perhaps exaggerated. (i) It has been exaggerated, it may be said, because the analogy does not hold good in all points. In the physical organism the cells have virtually given up their own individual lives to the life of the whole, and ceased to be individuals and to have ends, interests and rights of their own, and exist only as means towards the one general life, and have no existence apart from it. But in the community of minds, on the contrary, there is no real unity of mind, no resultant consciousness of the whole, no common sensorium or brain, but only a plurality of consciousnesses, each with its own sensorium. Each individual unit of society—each mind—is an end for itself, and can exist for itself; and society is only a means for the good of the individuals.

But the precise relation of the individual mind to society collective is a question of some difficulty.

Some hold that society collective is an organism, as much as the body and mind of the individual.

And that the right relations of the individual and the community are to be deduced from the idea of organism.

Others hold that the analogy is false, or true only in a limited sense, and that it is dangerous to draw conclusions from it.

. (ii) But this denial of the analogy and of the organic unity of society also leads to exaggeration. For if it is true that the individual is an end to himself, and not a means merely to something higher like the organic cell, it is true, on the other hand, that he can attain his end—the perfect realization of his own self—only by co-operation with other minds in an organized community; and that he would have no existence as a rational being out of relation to his fellow beings as a factor of society. Indeed, organism in the highest sense is *that in which every part is at once means and end*; and this is the true relation of the individual and society.

It is, therefore, safe to say that the perfection of the individual, and that of the society of which he is a member are each involved in the other as its correlative—that the individual can realize the potential perfection of his own being only in and through that of other individuals constituting society; and that the perfection of society collective can be realized only in and through that of individuals. We have, therefore, to explain and illustrate somewhat further this mutual dependence of the individual and society, and this common and socialistic nature of the good.

This question lies at the root of other important questions of politics and ethics.

§ 103. The question of the relation between the individual and society collective has been much discussed in recent times, partly (i) because it has a close connection with certain questions of biology and philosophy, such as the question whether human beings are to be regarded as units of distinct origin thrown together by force of circumstances, or as evolved by differentiation of a common spiritual principle; and (ii) because it lies at the root of certain questions of right, such as the question

whether the rights of individuals to the disposal of certain kinds of property are absolute and inviolable; or whether property is to be regarded as the joint product and possession of society collective, so that the rights of individuals over it are not absolute, but limited.

Now, we can understand the question best by comparing the two extreme positions of *individualism* and *collectivism* (or *socialism*)—the one regarding society as an artificial conglomeration of independent individuals, and the other, as an organism in which the individual is dependent on the collective whole, and incapable of existence apart from it. Thus—

(1) Ethical and political *individualism* regards society as an artificial aggregate of independent individuals, brought together, and made to co-operate together by considerations of expediency, but without any necessary connection, or essential dependence on each other. It assumes, therefore, that the person (or at least the family) is a unit capable of existing, developing, and realizing the end of his being by himself and in himself, independently of other rational beings; and that society is only an artificial contrivance for convenience, and not essential to the very existence of rational beings as such.

\*This tendency was expressed most clearly in the theory of the origin of society by a "social contract" or mutual agreement. There was an original "state of nature" in which men lived separately and independently of each other, each after his own mind, without common laws or institutions—each claiming and appropriating for himself everything that was

We have to consider and compare the two possible extremes of opinion.

(1) Individualism in Ethics and Politics.

Assumes, whether explicitly or implicitly, a peculiar theory of the origin of society and government.

Namely by  
voluntary  
Contract.

needful for his own preservation and enjoyment. Naturalistic thinkers said that in this primitive state of nature, moral laws and rights had as yet no existence; intuitionist thinkers said that they existed in the abstract, as "natural rights" and "laws," but had as yet no practical application. These natural rights and claims led to conflicting interests, and to warfare between individuals. The state of nature, therefore, proved to be a "state of warfare." Hence, at last they devised the expedient of joining together, and referring their "natural rights" to arbitrators or governors who would dispense them for the general good; and thus formed themselves into states and societies, by mutual compact. Thus, society was not essential to the existence of men as rational beings, but was formed by voluntary agreement of individuals for their mutual self-interests.

This view is individualism in its extreme and consistent form. It was accepted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by both hedonistic and intuitionist thinkers; and was preferred by many as favouring the liberty of individuals; and as expounded by Rousseau, it became the guiding principle of the French Revolution.

(2) Collectivism and Socialism in Ethics and Politics.

(2) The *collectivist* system, on the contrary, regards society as an organism pervaded by one common life of which individual minds are the organs. It follows from this that individuals derive their character as rational beings from the common life and mind of the society to which they belong, and can have no existence as rational minds apart from it, any more than the cells and organs of the body can exist as living creatures apart from the organism as a whole, and from the common life which has developed them as its organs. For, if

we consider the factors and conditions which determine the development of minds, we find that rational mind would be but an abstract potentiality, so to speak, and not a concrete actuality, apart from intercourse and co-operation with other rational minds; and that the development and perfection of the individual mind is possible only through and along with that of other minds—in other words, that mental development is reciprocal, and possible only in a community of minds—a society. Man, to be sure, comes into the world with this potentiality or possibility of reason latent in him. But a variety of forces combine in determining and modifying the degree to which, and the way in which, this original potentiality will develop into concrete mind; and these conditions, apart from the purely physical ones, are summed up in the mutual intercourse of minds with minds as factors of society. Thus—

(a) In the first place, the development of the individual mind is determined partly by conditions and factors antecedent to the individual's own life, and these are mainly social. The mind is not at birth like a sheet of blank paper on which anything may afterwards be written; or like a lump of soft wax which may be moulded into any shape by forces acting on it from without (though Locke and other empirical psychologists used to assume this, in order to prove that all the contents of mind are acquired by experience). For the very potentiality of reason implies that it brings into the world with it a mass of hereditary, innate, instinctive powers and tendencies, which make the development of reason possible.

But what, it may be asked, have these got to do

Founded on the theory that society is an organism, and not an artificial construction as the other view assumes.

The dependence of the individual on society as an organ on its organism is confirmed by many considerations.



(a)  
The innate  
elements of  
man's na-  
ture are  
derived  
from the  
social life of  
his pro-  
genitors.

with society? A man, it may said, had nothing to do with society before he was born. Yes: it is maintained that the innate tendencies of the individual are the aggregate resultant of the lives and experiences of his ancestors; which, again, were in their own time determined by mutual intercourse, and action and reaction with the society in which they lived. Thus the mind, even at birth, is already a product of society, summing up in itself the tendencies and traditions of the past out of which it has sprung.

(b)  
And the  
acquired ele-  
ments are  
derived from  
intercourse  
with his  
contempor-  
aries.

(b) Again, from the very beginning of life the individual is acted on, and moulded by the forces of the environment into which he is born. These include, no doubt, the forces of the physical environment—climate, scenery, food, and the like. But what certainly contributes most to his mental development is his mental or social environment, or the *society* into which he is born.

From whom  
he obtains  
not only  
physical  
support, but  
the very  
materials  
of his  
feelings and  
thoughts.

Thus, even for the physical needs of food, clothing, comfort, he depends on the services and arts of others. At first he depends entirely on others; subsequently, on his own reciprocal action and reaction *with* others in the practical intercourse of life—as worker with hand and mind, employer and employee. And before he can attain the mental development needed for co-operation with others in the work of the world, he has to appropriate the ideas and knowledge of other men, and acquire their habits and arts. He has to think their thoughts, feel their feelings, and reproduce their motives and imitate their actions. In short, without the help and co-operation of society, he would not rise above the level of the animals, even if he could live at all.

We must conclude, therefore, that the individual owes everything that makes his development into an actual and rational moral being possible, to the society into which he is born. Without intercourse with his fellowmen he would be a rational being only potentially, *i.e.*, he would have in him the power of developing into one under certain conditions; but these conditions would be wanting—being mainly action and reaction with other rational beings. The individual can realize his own life only by identifying his life with that of family, profession, city, country and mankind.

Hence it is necessary to admit the organic nature of society.

In short, the individual is only an organ of an organism, which is society; and as the heart, lungs, liver, hand, fibres and cells can have no existence, of their own apart from the corporate body to which they belong, so the individual could have no existence as an actual rational mind apart from the society of minds into which he is born.

Or that society is to the individual what organism is to organ.

Thus, society and individuals might be said to be related as the sentence and the words composing it are related; the separate words have no meaning by themselves apart from the sentence; and the sentence is nothing without the words composing it. But when the words are taken in their relations to the sentence as a whole, then each of them is found to have a distinct meaning of its own, and out of the combined meanings of the words arises the meaning of the sentence as a whole. The words give meaning to the sentence as a whole, but at the same time it is the sentence as a whole that gives meaning to the words.

§ 104. Thus, mental and moral progress is essentially social progress. Individuals, indeed, contribute to the progress of the common mind; but it is the collective acquisitions of the common mind, again, that make individual minds possible. It is

Hence individual and social progress are correlative.

Society moulds the individual, and the individual reacts upon society.

because the common mind has made them what they are that they are able to react on, and modify the common mind. And the individual in society is at once means and end; the individual exists for society, and society exists for the individuals.

Some think, however, that this view of the dependence of man on society is refuted by the existence of great men.

This dependence of man on society may appear, at first sight, to be refuted by the case of great men or heroes. These seem to stand out in solitary independence—as if they came from another world, and derived little or nothing from the world into which they have been born; and seem to make the society and times in which they live, rather than to be made by them. And Carlyle wrote a book on heroes or great men, in which he represents them as independent of their times, and as making and controlling the destinies of men as if they were themselves of different origin, and owed nothing to their fellows.

Who seem to make society and social progress, instead of being made by them.

But there is fallacy in this. Great men are, no doubt, endowed by nature with potentialities greater than those of other men; but these can never develop into actualities except in so far as conditions and opportunities are supplied by the society into which they are born. (1) They have to absorb the ideas, habits, and arts of their fellows as much as other men have, and can do nothing without their co-operation. They also, as Hegel says, "have sucked at the breast of the universal ethos," and are children of their time. (2) They can never develop and apply their own special kind of genius unless the circumstances of their time—the thoughts and wants, and aspirations of their contemporaries—be such as to draw them forth, and co-operate with them. (3) The ideas by which they revolutionize

society are never altogether new, but have long been gathering and brooding in the mental atmosphere; and what great leaders really do, is to express them more clearly and apply them with greater vigour than other men could do. Thus, Cæsar, Cromwell, Napoleon, Shakespeare, Newton and Darwin were all products of their times—not indeed in the sense that their times gave them their exceptional powers, but in the sense that they gave them the means of developing and applying their powers.

But even these owe more to society than they contribute to it.

This view of society as an organism of minds leads to the idealistic conclusion that the good of individuals and that of society collective is ultimately identical; and that moral consciousness is the discerning and feeling of this ultimate identity of self and others as partakers of one common nature and one common good; while religion, again, is the feeling and conviction that this harmony of finite wills and ends is the working out of the will and nature of one absolute mind, *viz.*, God, and that the existence and well-being of the self depend upon its harmony with this all-embracing power, and the plan and purpose according to which that power evolves and sustains the world.

Hence, the meaning of morality, and its connection with religion.

## PART V.

### RESPONSIBILITY.

#### XXVII. Merit and Guilt.

§ 105. In analysing the consciousness of obligation, we found that it includes the conviction of responsibility, or liability to gain or to suffer, to be better or worse, from rightness or wrongness of conduct; which contains again within

As the idea of rightness gives rise to that of obligation, so that of obli-

gation gives rise to that of responsibility or liability to gain or suffer.

in the ideas of *merit* and *guilt*. This consciousness of responsibility is a conviction and feeling that we shall be *justly* liable to have evil imposed upon ourselves proportionate to whatever evil we impose upon others by *unjust* actions of our own ; that in suspending the rights of others by wrong actions towards them, we are incurring a reciprocal suspension of our own rights ; that our negation of the rights of others necessitates a negation of that negation by suppression of our own rights.

Which is an application of the idea of justice as equilibrium of relations.

This conviction evidently rises out of the fundamental moral intuition and idea of rightness and justice as a congruity or harmony of relations. If it is right in us to act in such a way as to confer good on others, and wrong to act in such as to impose evil upon them, then, by an extension of the same idea, it will be right in others to act in such a way as to impose evils upon us, in return for those imposed by us upon them. This evidently follows from a rigorous application of the principle of equity, or equilibrium of relations in which justice consists (§ 100).

And contains within it the subordinate ideas of merit, desert and guilt.

Out of this intuition of the rightness and wrongness of relations, then, rise the ideas of *merit* and *demerit*, *good* and *ill-desert*, *innocence* and *guilt*, as being contained implicitly in the consciousness of rightness and obligation ; and these make up the idea of responsibility.

What, then, is the nature of this gain or loss in a strictly moral sense ? It consists in an increase

Thus every good action may be said to increase the worth of the agent in the sense that it brings him nearer to the ideal excellence at which every action aims, or should aim. We express this by saying that it gives him *merit*. By saying that his action gives him merit, however, we mean merely that it gives him additional worth or excellence, and there-

fore *good desert* in the sense of a *right* to approval and esteem; whether the good desert implies also a right to positive reward depends on circumstances, not necessarily moral. On the other hand, every wrong action may be said to lessen the worth and excellence of the agent, by removing him further from the realization of the ideal good; and we express this by saying that he has incurred *demerit*—meaning diminution of worth, entailing *ill-desert*, or a *right* to disapproval, dislike, resentment, and whatever other evil may be essential to the negation of the evil wrongly inflicted by his action, *i.e.*, to the restoration of the equilibrium of relations. And extreme forms of ill-desert are called *guilt*.

or diminution of the worth of one's essential nature.

This gain or loss is what is expressed as merit or demerit.

§ 106. We have to consider further, then, how the *ideas* of merit and demerit and their different degrees arise, and in what the *qualities* of merit and demerit consist, and how the different degrees of merit and demerit are to be *judged*.

But there are various questions to be considered in connection with merit and demerit.

A. Now, as the ideas of merit and demerit rise directly out of the ideas of duty and obligation (as these again rise out of the fundamental intuition and idea of moral rightness), we shall understand best how the idea of merit and demerit and their different degrees arise, by falling back on the distinction already made between two classes of actions distinguished by two kinds or degrees of obligation. Thus

We can best understand how the ideas arise, by help of the distinction between determinate and indeterminate obligation.

(1) On the one side, we have such cases as these: a debtor pays his debt; a contractor finishes his work at the time agreed upon in his contract; a merchant sells his goods at the proper market-price; the magistrate dispenses justice with impar-

In some cases, the moral obligation is supplemented by equis-  
tic motive of

self-interest,  
and is deter-  
minate.

In other  
cases, the  
moral obli-  
gation is  
left alto-  
gether to  
itself, and is  
said to be  
indetermin-  
ate.

Though this  
difference is  
legal as  
much as  
moral, being  
due to the  
presence or  
absence of  
contract.

tiality ; the guardian in due time makes over to his ward all the property entrusted to his keeping ; the servant discharges his duties conscientiously ; and

(2) On the other side, we have such cases as these : we find many sacrificing their own comforts, enjoyments, and means in the hope of relieving the wants, and bettering the condition of their fellow-beings, without being bound by any contract to do so ; we find the nurse and physician settling in the disease-infected district, and risking their own health and lives in the hope of saving the lives of others ; the surgeon offering himself as a subject of experiment in the hope of discovering the cause of a fatal disease : the senator braving the malice and cruelty of tyrannical power to uphold the principles of justice.

And comparing these two classes of cases we cannot fail to perceive a difference between them. In both classes there is moral rightness and moral obligation, and therefore moral merit, and the agents are *deserving* of public approval as upright and honourable men. (a) But in the first class of cases there is contract explicit or understood, violation of which would subject the agents to social and political penalties, so that in such cases moral motive is supplemented by prudential, and therefore no sacrifice of self-interest is entailed. To fulfil one's contracts and to be honest, truthful and trustworthy is the least that can be expected of any man. (b) In the second class of cases, on the other hand, the agent has done more than he has bound himself to do by any contract with his fellowmen. The purely moral obligation of the actions is not supplemented by fear of any social or legal penalty, and the performance of them entails a purely voluntary sacrifice of self-interest—of ease, enjoyments, wealth, and possibly life itself (§ 91).

Hence both classes of actions are *morally*

(though only the first set are legally) obligatory. But there is a difference in the form of the obligation; the one set are *determinately* and *definitely*, the other *indeterminately* and *indefinitely* obligatory; which gives to the one class a semi-legal and prudential, along with their moral, character, while the other class are purely moral.

Now, as both classes of actions are obligatory, we can see that in both classes the performance carries with it something which we call *merit* in the agent, and the non-performance something which we call *demerit*; but we can see at the same time, that these qualities of merit and demerit differ in degree according to the nature of the obligation.

Thus we can see at once that a less degree of moral merit will attach generally to performance of actions of the former class—to those in which the obligation is determinate, and therefore supplemented by the force of self-interest; and a higher degree to those of the second class, where the obligation is indeterminate, and therefore purely moral. And conversely, we see that a greater degree of *demerit* or *ill-desert* will attach generally to the non-performance of those of the determinate class, and consequent violation of the principles of contract; and a less degree to non-performance of the indeterminate class. There is obviously less merit in devoting a sum of money to the payment of a debt which we are bound to pay, than there is in devoting an equal sum to the relief of famine in a distant country, or in sacrificing ease, comfort and enjoyments, and endangering health and life in the hope of relieving the sufferings of others.

§ 107. B. The above distinction helps to go further and determine more precisely in what the *quality* of merit or demerit consists, and on what its *degrees* depend.—

Now, this difference in the form of the obligation makes us feel that there is a difference in the nature of the agent, according to his performance or non-performance of the actions.

We express this difference by saying that in the one case he has merit, and in the other, demerit.

And we feel that this quality of merit or demerit differs in degree according to the obligation.

We can now determine more precisely the nature of merit and demerit.



Outwardly  
merit is the  
subordinat-  
ing of selfish  
interests to  
moral good.

(1) It is obvious, in the first place, that merit will manifest itself outwardly in the ignoring of egoistic interests and gratifications *for the sake of moral rightness, or out of reverence for moral obligation*; and that the agent's doing so is a measure of the conformity of his nature and will with the standard of moral goodness. Hence those actions will be judged most meritorious in which the egoistic interests are greatest, which the self sets aside from the consciousness of moral obligation, and for the sake of a higher ideal good. And those will be less meritorious in which the force of moral obligation is supplemented, if not supplanted, by egoistic anticipations of reward or punishment. In other words, the judgment of merit will be mixed and qualified in the case of those actions in which the impulse of obligation is, or may be, supplemented by considerations of self-interest; and unqualified in the case of those actions in which we are sure there has been no intermixture of self-interest, as in the case of indeterminate obligations.

And demerit,  
the subordinat-  
ing of  
moral good  
to selfish  
interests.

*Demerit*, on the other hand, will consist in ignoring rightness and obligation and the ideal good of one's higher nature for the sake of egoistic interests and gratifications; and will be *greatest* where the interests for the sake of which duty is sacrificed are the least, because in such cases, the reverence for duty and strength of moral motive must be least; and will be *least*, when the temptations yielded to are strongest, because in such cases the degree of moral weakness *manifested* is least.

Hence it may be said that merit is directly proportionate to the amount of egoistic interests over-

come for the sake of duty; and that demerit is inversely proportionate to the egoistic interests and temptations yielded to.

(2) But it is obvious, at the same time, that the inner and essential meaning of merit and demerit will have to be understood in this way.—Demerit will consist ultimately in the degradation and loss of worth which every wrong action implies in the essential nature of the self; and Merit will ultimately consist in the increase of worth or comparative perfection which every right action evinces in the self. For every good action is a triumph of what is higher over what is lower in the self's essential nature—a step towards the ideal self-realization which is its highest good and end; while every wrong action, again, is a step in the opposite direction. For every action either begins a habit or strengthens one already begun; and habit goes on accumulating with every new action, and carries on the development of the self in its own direction, which may be downwards or upwards, for better or for worse, towards or away from the perfect realization of the self.

§ 108. C. But there is still another question with regard to merit and demerit, *viz.*, as to how or by what criterion the merit and demerit of actions are to be *judged*; and this question affects rather deeply the nature of merit and demerit themselves. We find that merit may be said, in a general way, to manifest itself in *the subordinating of egoistic interests to motives of moral goodness*. But egoistic interests may affect the self in different ways. In some persons, and in some cases, they give rise to strong desires and violent passions. Other persons

Inwardly  
merit is an  
increase in  
the essential  
perfection  
and worth of  
the self  
which every  
good action  
carries with  
it.

And de-  
merit, a loss  
of essential  
worth, and  
degradation  
of the self  
to a lower  
level.

Nevertheless  
there are dif-  
ferences of  
opinion as  
to how merit  
and demerit  
and their  
degrees  
should be  
judged.

Two possible  
ways of  
judging and  
measuring  
• them.

are less susceptible of such desires and passions, so that in them such interests give rise to nothing more than sober intellectual judgment of relations, and deliberate appreciation of better and worse. In other words, one person is constitutionally more subject to violent temptations than another. How, then, are these *differences of temperament to affect our judgments of merit and demerit?* If we are to judge merit and demerit by the self-interest overcome or yielded to, is it to be by self-interest in a *subjective* sense, *viz.*, by the desire and passion actually felt, *i.e.*, by the strength of spontaneous passion overcome or yielded to? or in an *objective* sense, *viz.*, by the means and materials which would serve for the gratification of passions if they *were* felt, *i.e.*, if the agent were not superior to them?

Are they to  
be measured  
by the  
strength of  
evil passion  
overcome or  
yielded to?

(1) It has been maintained that the merit of right-doing depends ultimately on *the strength of evil desire and passion overcome for the sake of right-doing*; and that *he* has the greatest moral merit, therefore, whose evil desires and passions are strongest, but who has at the same time strength of will to overcome them from reverence for moral good; so that in right-doing, merit is directly proportionate to the strength of the evil desire overcome, and in wrong-doing the demerit is inversely proportionate to the strength of passion yielded to.

This would  
make it ne-  
cessary to  
assume that  
evil passions  
must always  
be present

This is the view of Kant, revived by Martineau. But it leads to this paradoxical result, that in order to have any chance of earning moral merit, one must be endowed with evil passions so as to have the merit of resisting them; and that there will, therefore, be no merit in doing good actions, if one loves to do them. Thus, there will be no merit in

doing good to our neighbours if we love them as the gospel enjoins; we must hate them, and do them good in spite of our hatred.

before we can attain merit.

(2) But the view of merit given above is different from this. Merit consists ultimately and essentially in the worth or excellence of the agent's nature, and especially in the acquisition of additional worth—in progress towards that self-realization which is the highest end. Such moral progress supposes that one's whole nature, and therefore his desires and passions, are dominated more and more by self-determination or free will; and will, if truly free, consist in the identifying of one's self with what is the ultimate and essential good of self, and therefore of rational being in general. And this identifying of the self with what is good, is equivalent to the gradual undermining, overcoming and extinguishing of all such desires and passions as are out of harmony with the circumstances of a rational mind as a factor of the organism of minds.

Or are they to be judged by the inward purity and perfection of the agent's nature as manifested in his actions?

That is, by his superiority to evil passions and temptations?

Moral merit, therefore, will not depend on the presence and perpetuity of perverse desires and passions—of a perpetual discord in the constitution of mind—as supposed in the other theory; but rather consist in the extinction of them, and will reach its highest point when the mind has so identified itself with the idea of the good, as to be no longer affected with desires and passions rising out of contrary ideas.

This criterion will suppose in general the absence rather than the presence of evil passions.

And though the resisting of evil passions will be meritorious as evincing the moral progress of the self, yet the being superior to such passions will be still more meritorious as evincing moral development already attained.

But good or ill-desert may mean deserving reward or punishment.

• § 109. We have thus far spoken of responsibility as liability to merit and demerit in the sense of an increase or decrease of essential worth—of a rise or fall in the scale of being—as a consequence of our actions; and to good and ill-desert in the sense of deserving or having a right to the approval or disapproval merely—the praise or blame, esteem or disesteem of rational beings in general.

Which mean properly not consequences following analytically from within, but imposed synthetically from without.

But responsibility may mean responsibility to something more than this; having good and ill-desert may mean deserving something more than public esteem and disesteem. For in analysing the ideas of right and justice, we find that, if it is right for us to do certain actions to the advantage of others, and we are, therefore, under an obligation to do them, then it is right for us to have corresponding disadvantages imposed upon ourselves if we fail to do them, or do the opposite; or, in other words, that, if we have a right to good for doing good, we have a right to suffer evil for doing evil. Such reciprocity of good and evil—such *retributive* justice—is evidently implied in that objective harmony of relations in which justice consists (§ 100).

And are sometimes called sanctions.

Thus the idea of justice and right leads to the idea of good and ill-desert, and the idea of good and ill-desert leads to the idea of good and evil following upon right and wrong actions, not only as consequences of their rightness and wrongness, but as consequences *imposed upon the agent of the actions from without by other persons*. When these consequences are thus imposed from without, and by the agency directly or indirectly of other persons—*i.e.*, when they are synthetical and not analytical consequences—then they are spoken of

as *rewards* and *punishments*. And, being imposed on account of the moral goodness or badness of actions, they are sometimes called the moral *sanctions*.

And when ill-desert takes the form of deserving punishment, or evil inflicted from without in compensation for evil done, then it is called *guilt*.

The idea of ill-desert and guilt leads us to speak further of the *sanctions* of conduct.

### XXVIII. Sanctions.

§ 110. All actions have conse-

quences following from them over and above those foreseen, desired and intended ones aimed at by the agent himself (his intention). These unintended consequences to the agent include—

Hence the moral consequences of actions may be of two kinds.

(a) Consequences arising from within, i.e., consequences to the agents own nature and mental constitution, modifying it for better or worse, raising it higher or sinking it lower in the scale of being; and making themselves felt ultimately in agreeable or disagreeable emotion.

Following analytically from within.

(b) Consequences imposed from without, i.e., consequences first to other persons for better or worse, changing the relations and therefore the conduct of other persons towards the agent, but thereby returning upon the agent himself, and affecting him externally—in other words, consequences of his own actions reflected back from other persons upon himself, and therefore including rewards and punishments.

Imposed synthetically from without.

It is these *reflected* consequences of action—infllicted upon the agent by other persons on account of his actions towards them—that we have now to consider.

Consequences imposed synthetically from without are called rewards and punishments.

And, when they are imposed on account of the moral qualities of actions, they may be called Moral Sanctions.

\* Now, these unintended consequences of action depend in part upon the moral quality of action—upon the agent's deserving and having a moral right to such consequences whether they are painful or pleasurable; and in so far as they are imposed in consequence of the moral goodness or badness of action, they may be called the *moral sanctions* of action. And responsibility for action includes not only the agent's being deserving of the purely moral approval and disapproval of others (which may be all that is really implied when we speak of merit and demerit), but also, in some cases, of the more obvious consequences of reward and punishment denoted by the word sanctions. And when we speak of demerit or ill-desert as *guilt*, we are thinking more especially of liability to punishments inflicted from without by other persons.

The introduction of this question of sanctions, at least of external sanctions, into ethics may be objected to on the ground that it is introducing a *hedonistic element*—the sanctions being conceived mainly as rewards and punishments, pleasures and pains. But we cannot avoid altogether the question of the connection between right-doing and wrong-doing and pleasure and pain; and pleasure and pain are here regarded only as unforeseen consequences of action, and not as ends and standards.

Sanction means literally an act by which something is made sacred.

§ 111. The word *sanction* meant originally a sanctifying, or making inviolable, of something by means of a religious ceremony. Hence, in common speech, it has come to mean any outward mark of approval, from a superior power, by way of confirmation or ratification, giving authority and validity to an act or law. And in ethics it is used to mean

something following in consequence of the observance or infringement of moral law, and serving to confirm or ratify the law, and thereby the rightness or wrongness of the action; and this confirmation of the law is understood to consist in pleasures or pains following as consequences of the action, and apparently imposed directly or indirectly as rewards or punishments by some superior power. The ethical use of the word is evidently derived from the ancient legal theory of morality, according to which the lawgiver makes his laws obligatory and inviolable by imposing punishments on those who violate them. And though it is used sometimes also in systems which do not identify obligation with external law, yet even in them it carries with it the implication that these consequences express the approval or disapproval of these actions by a supreme rational power manifested in the order and evolution of the world-system. Hence, the question of the sanctions is one of the points at which ethics and religion touch each other.

Now the possible sanctions of conduct in the above sense will include the following:—

A. *External* sanctions, or rewards and punishments, imposed on the person synthetically and directly from without, comprising—

(a) The punishments inflicted by the government of the country for transgression of its laws, and which may be regarded as *moral* sanctions also in so far at least as these laws may be conceived to be identical with, or in conformity with moral law—*e.g.*, fine, imprisonment, banishment and death. These may be called the *political* sanctions of conduct.

Hence it comes to mean something which proves laws or actions to be of sacred, or at least of authoritative origin.

Suggested by the legal theories.

Sanctions in the sense of pleasures and pains synthetically imposed, will include—

Political penalties.



Social  
rewards  
and punish-  
ments.

(b) The rewards and punishments imposed by society collectively on its own members individually, for conformity with, or transgression of its manners and customs—the recognised though unwritten rules of society, which every one is required to take upon himself, and conform to, in order to enjoy the benefits of society—*e.g.*, public esteem, praise, honour, promotion on the one hand, and dishonour, shame, excommunication on the other. These may be called the *social* sanctions.

Physiologi-  
cal conse-  
quences con-  
sidered as  
determined  
by a moral  
power  
working in  
nature.

(c) The beneficial or injurious consequences to bodily health and strength, and length of life, which follow in consequence of some forms of conduct, owing directly to the physiological constitution of the organism, but ultimately, it is believed, to a moral organizing power working in nature. Thus temperance has a tendency to be followed by health and strength, while intemperance in all its forms leads to disease and death. These may be spoken of as *natural* or *physiological* sanctions.

Happiness  
and misery  
of the future  
life, con-  
sidered as  
determined  
synthetically  
by God.

(d) The rewards and punishments which are attached to good and evil conduct by the express will of God—in the present life, or life to come—heaven or hell. These may be spoken of as *religious* or *theological* sanctions.

But as the physiological consequences of good and bad conduct, referred to above, follow from the constitution and laws of nature, and the constitution of nature follows from the will of God, therefore, the third and fourth groups may be combined under one head as the *divine* sanctions.

But the  
happiness  
and misery

B. The *Internal* consequences rising from within the mind itself,—*vis.*, the happiness or misery imposed on one by one's own conscience—the consciousness of elevating or debasing one's

own essential nature, are sometimes spoken of as *internal* sanctions—though not literally sanctions in the sense defined above, being of analytical and not of synthetical origin. Thus the moral judgment of one's self gives rise to the moral sentiments, which constitute a large part of the happiness or misery of many minds, and have been called sanctions of conduct, because they follow as its consequences.

Thus, the consciousness of having done what is right is followed by a feeling of self-satisfaction, contentment, rest, or what is called 'having a good conscience'; while the consciousness of having done wrong is followed by a haunting feeling of dissatisfaction with self, shame, remorse—the 'evil conscience'—which is sufficient to destroy the happiness of one's whole life. And these, some think, constitute the real obliging, binding and impelling force of moral life—the motive-force of purely moral obligation.

§ 112. The above are the different possible sanctions of conduct. Their connexion with the different moral theories may now be indicated more fully. Thus—

(1) The *Legal* theories which make right and wrong depend on the laws of the state, or the commands of God, or the rules, manners and customs of society, will make the political, social and religious sanctions to be the real motive-force of right-doing, and ground of obligation.

For, if the commands and requirements of state, society or God, be what make actions to be right or wrong, then the rewards and punishments imposed by state, society and God must be what makes actions (*viz.*, those which are right in this sense) to be also obligatory. If they make rightness and wrongness, they will make obligation also.

rising analytically out of the good or evil conscience have commonly been included among the sanctions, and may therefore be referred to in connection with them.

But the meaning and importance of the sanctions differ according to the different theories of the moral standard.

According to legal theories they are the sole ground of obligation.

• And it is evidently to the legal theories of conduct that the term sanction is most appropriate, because the word most naturally means an expression of approval from one who has given an order, to one who has carried out the order. To the other theories it applies rather in a figurative way.

And according to egoism also they are the sole ground of public morality and obligation.

(2) *Egoistic* Hedonism, in making public morality—by which it means merely the outward order and peace of society—to depend on the laws of government and of society itself, will thereby make the obligatoriness and observance of these laws to depend on the punishments and rewards, which government and society impose to enforce their laws. If individuals were left to themselves, then their self-interest (which according to this theory is their only motive) would lead them to seek their own self-interest even by the injury or ruin of others. To prevent this, the state imposes laws and enforces them by punishments, which make it to be the self-interest of individuals to avoid injury and injustice to others.

Therefore, according to this theory, public morality will depend wholly on external sanctions political and social (as in the case of the legal theories, with which, in fact, this egoistic theory has always been combined). "A man is said to be obliged when he is urged by a violent motive, resulting from the command of another, and the violent motive is happiness or misery, punishment or reward" (Paley).

Altruism makes the sympathetic feelings to be the true moral sanction.

(3) The *universalistic* form of Hedonism accepts external sanctions of reward and punishment as useful, and perhaps necessary means for repressing the unruly self-interest of selfishly inclined individuals, and as a means of developing disinterested feelings through transference of interest.

But such sanctions themselves appeal only to self-

interest, while this theory aims at altruism or disinterested conduct. This form of hedonism, therefore, in order to be true to itself must rest moral obligation *proper* on the internal sanctions of moral sentiment, or of the good and evil conscience.

At the same time, it identifies conscience, we have found, with capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling, which makes every unjust and cruel action to be a source of permanent, haunting regret and remorse. These feelings are equivalent to a sanction of punishment following the action, and the knowledge beforehand that we shall suffer from them if we do wrong, acts as a force deterring from unjust and cruel actions.

But is obliged to seek help from external sanctions of reward and punishment appealing to self-interest.

And at the same time it admits that such purely disinterested bonds of obligation are insufficient by themselves, and that for practical purposes they have to be supplemented by external sanctions of reward and punishment appealing to self-interest.

(4) The *Intuitionist* account of moral judgment which makes rightness and obligation to be inherent in the nature of action itself, independently of commands and consequences, will not depend on external sanctions for making right conduct to be obligatory, because it will be obligatory by its own nature without them. According to this system, therefore, actions done merely for the sake of obtaining reward, or avoiding punishment, *i.e.*, on account of external sanctions, will be without any truly *moral* value, being merely egoistic appeals to self-interest.

To intuitionism the feelings of conscience are the only sanctions that can be recognised as moral motive-forces.

Hence, if this system is consistent with sanctions at all as a *moral* motive-force, it will be only with the internal sanctions of the good and evil con-

But this system requires retri-

butive punishment, though not as a motive, yet as something right in itself, and necessary to the harmony of relations.

science—the moral sentiments which follow as analytical consequences of good and evil conduct. For acting from the impulse of the feelings which rise out of the cognition of rightness and wrongness, will be the same thing as acting for the sake of rightness itself. But, with this understanding, there will be no objection to calling these feelings of conscience, sanctions.

But, though this system cannot consistently recognise external sanctions as a *moral* motive-force (which would be falling back on hedonism), it recognises punishments as involved in and required by the idea of justice as an objective reality. From this point of view, however, punishment is regarded not as a motive-force to deter from wrongdoing, but as something to which the wrong-doer has a *right*, and which is necessary to restore the equilibrium of relations. Punishment is regarded, therefore, as *retributive*, not as merely preventive.

Martineau's theory of obligation, however, appears to combine intuitionism with legal and egoistic principles, *viz.*, by making the obligation of right conduct to depend partly at least upon external command or law (even though it be that of God), and therefore upon external reward and punishment (§ 100).

Idealism (taken apart from intuitionism) does not recognise sanctions as a moral factor—unless the feelings arising analyti-

(5) Finally, of the *self-realization* or *perfection* theory much the same thing may be said as of the intuitionism account, of which it is only a deeper expression. It cannot admit sanctions to have any place in morality as motive-forces or grounds of *moral* obligation, because what is done for the sake of pleasure or pain, reward or punishment (sanctions) leaves the character of the person unaffected, and

therefore contributes nothing to the highest end, which is the perfection of the essential nature of rational beings; and because conduct prompted by such desires and fears would not be moral at all in the strict sense, but only prudential or egoistic—leaving the essential nature of the person unchanged. The legal and egoistic standards which base conduct on such desires and fears, are not *moral* standards at all. Morality proper—aiming at the essential perfection of the self—excludes all thought of rewards and punishments, and therefore of sanctions in this sense. The only motive-force that it admits, is the idea of the good which the self recognises and freely adopts and imposes it upon itself, as the ultimate end and goal of all its actions. The obligation of attaining the end is, therefore, self-imposed; and the self imposes it on itself, not for the sake of reward or punishment (sanctions), but because it recognises it to be good in itself.

The system does not, indeed, ignore feeling, but it assumes that agreeable feeling is not itself the end and good, nor the motive for seeking the good, but only an accompaniment or consequence of attaining it.

The term sanction may, therefore, be retained for the pleasurable feeling of self-satisfaction, which must accompany the consciousness of approximating or conducing to the end, and the painful feeling of dissatisfaction with one's self, which must accompany the consciousness of failing to attain one's highest end (even though the pleasure and pain are not themselves the motives).

Even Kant himself admits, however, that though pleasure and pain cannot be the motives of right action, yet the world-system would be essentially unjust and imperfect if virtue were not ultimately combined with happiness, synthetically, and if wick-

cally out of the consciousness of what is good and bad in one's own nature be regarded as such.

Some, however, think that these internal sanctions are insufficient, and that the harmony of the world supposes an ultimate synthesis of virtue with external

grounds of  
happiness.

edness did not ultimately result in misery; and that the harmony of the world-system supposes a supreme moral organizing power, which will ultimately join happiness to goodness. This raises the question of the relation of religion to morality.

Hence moral  
science has  
to consider  
the relation  
between  
morality and  
religion.

### XXIX. Morality and Religion.

§ 113. In treating of sanctions reference has been made to *divine* sanctions of morality. That there are such sanctions means that the world-system is so constituted that the equilibrium of relations in which equity consists, when disturbed ultimately readjusts itself, and right-doing and wrong-doing ultimately find their reward and punishment. This supposes, however, that the order of the world is a moral one, *i.e.*, determined ultimately in accordance with a moral end and motive. And this means that the determining and evolving power is rational mind—morality being ultimately reason. But this is the fundamental assumption of religion also. Therefore, a treatise on moral science is not complete without consideration of the relation between morality and religion.

For though  
not identical  
they are  
closely re-  
lated springs  
of action.

Now by morality we mean—the aspiration and effort of the self to perfect its own nature by regulating its volitions and actions according to a standard of harmony and essential excellence supplied by its own reason. By religion we must understand—the belief in a supreme mental power as the originator and sustainer of the world of finite beings, and the feeling of dependence on that power for existence and well-being, and the aspiration of finite minds to adapt themselves to the will and secure the approval of that supreme power.

Now the main questions as to their relation are :

whether religion depends on morality, or morality depends on religion, or whether they have independent sources in human nature though they naturally tend to coalesce at last, as they have done in modern life.—

Three main questions involved.

I. It is possible to think, and many have thought, that *morality is dependent on religion*—that religion comes first in natural order of development, and that it is religion that makes morality.

Is it religion (as belief in God) that makes morality?

This view is implied in the legal theory of the moral standard in its religious form (§ 41). It is the will and command of God that makes certain actions to be right and others wrong. There is no moral right or wrong, therefore, without the expressed will and command of God, and men would never come to think of such a distinction if the will of God were not made manifest to them. And the aspiration to do what is right and avoid what is wrong, which is *morality*, rises out of the aspiration to preserve one's self and promote one's well-being by winning the approval and favour of God by obedience to his commands, which is *religion*.

This is assumed in the legal theory of morality.

This view of the relation of morality to religion is open, however, to such grave objections as these: that it makes the will of God to be arbitrary—creating, and therefore not controlled by, standards of rightness; and makes religion subject to the morbid imagination of men, leaving them free to conceive God in conformity with their own passions, prejudices and morbid fancies; and leads thereby to perverted, cruel and degrading forms of religion. We must rather think of moral goodness as inherent in God's essential nature; and of his will as expressing the necessary goodness of

But is open to grave objections.



his nature, instead of creating standards arbitrarily.

Hence, though the above has been the most widely held opinion in the past, it is hardly maintained now.

§ 114. II. It is possible to think, on the other hand, that *religion is dependent on morality*—that morality comes first in order of development but leads on to religion, so that the relation of the latter to the former is analytical. The derivation of religion from morality may be explained in two ways.—

Or is it morality that makes religion (and therefore belief in God)?

Theory of Kant.

Duty is the first and most fundamental of all certainties.

And devotion to duty must ultimately lead to happiness.

But happiness does not follow of itself from virtue.

(1) We may reason in this way: We begin with the immediate intuition and certainty of the reality of moral distinctions—of rightness and wrongness as inherent objectively in the nature of actions; and of the obligatoriness or necessity of right conduct as necessary to the full realization and perfection of the self; and of this essential perfection as the highest end and good of every rational being. And it may be said that, along with these intuitions, we have at the same time an intuitive conviction of *the right of the rational soul to happiness* in proportion to the self-realized perfection of its nature. But happiness is not contained analytically in moral excellence of nature—does not rise out of it necessarily as a consequence. And yet it is required by the internal harmony and self-consistency of the world-system that happiness should ultimately coalesce with goodness—otherwise there would be an element of contradiction and deception in the order of the world. But if their relation is not analytical, it must be *synthetical*. That is, if happiness does not rise necessarily

out of the nature of goodness, it must be *added on* to it by some power.

Hence our rational faith in the consistency and justice of the world-order compels to think of a power in the world which tends ultimately to connect happiness with moral goodness—a supreme rational power which is at the same time a moral power, making the order of the universe to be not only a rational order, but at the same time a *moral* one.

There must therefore be a power in the world which combines happiness with virtue.

Thus, the intuitions and certainties of our moral nature—our practical reason—lead us necessarily to the idea of, and belief in God; and therefore to the aspiration to bring our nature and will into harmony with the nature and will of God, which is religion.

According to this view, then, religion will rise out of morality; and though religion, being thus the offspring of morality, will not require anything which is not required at the same time by moral reason; yet religious feeling, thus evolved out of moral thought, will have the reflex result of confirming and deepening moral aspiration.

Hence belief in God, and hence religion.

This is essentially the view of Kant and the "rationalistic" theologians who followed him. Kant's "*Critique of Pure (Theoretical) Reason*" had tended to confirm the scepticism of Hume,—taking away all certainty from the usual theoretical grounds and inferences on which we commonly build our beliefs in metaphysical realities (soul, independent world, God); but his "*Critique of Practical Reason*" aimed at showing that such beliefs (soul, freedom, immortality, God) have secure foundations in the intuitions, conditions and requirements of our practical and moral nature (§ 8).

(2) Or we may reason in this way: in having

Theory of  
Martineau  
and others.

an immediate intuition and certainty of the objective reality of moral distinctions, we have an intuitive certainty also of moral obligation as inherent in the moral rightness of actions. We feel that we are under an obligation, or that it is our duty, to do what we perceive to be right. But the obligatoriness of right actions means that they are *due* to some one. Obligation implies two persons—one who *owes* the obligation, and another to whom he owes it, or to whom it is *due*. We cannot, therefore, be conscious of obligation without filling in the idea of one to whom the obligation is due.

To what person, then, are all our obligations ultimately due? It may be said that they are due to our fellowmen; and it is true that many are due to them in the first instance. But the majority are such that they cannot be due to our fellowmen. And even those due to them in the first instance, are so due only because they are due ultimately to a power higher than men. Hence—

The certainty of moral obligation carries with it the certainty of a supreme person to whom obligation is ultimately due.

(i) The consciousness of obligation thus suggests and forces upon our minds the idea of a supreme personal power to whom all obligation is ultimately due, and whose will and command gives force and effect to intuitive moral laws (§ 92).

And the rising steps of the moral scale lead to the idea of a supreme person in whom the moral ideal is realized.

(ii) And further, the rising degrees of the moral scale suggest an ideal of perfect moral excellence. But such an ideal would be to our minds only a vague abstraction, instead of the spring of hopeful aspiration which it really is, if we did not think of this moral ideal as already realized in a perfect concrete moral person. Thus our moral ideal forces on us the conviction that the supreme person who is the ultimate authority and ground of obligation, is

himself a perfect moral being (instead of being above goodness as the legal theory implies).

In this way our moral intuitions suggest, and force upon our conviction, the idea of God as the ultimate personal ground of obligation, and type of moral excellence; and from the belief in God the other elements of religion, emotional and volitional, necessarily follow.

And the belief thus springing out of our moral nature is confirmed by our intellectual nature also, *viz.*, by inference from the nature of causation, leading to the conclusion, that all causality is ultimately of mental origin; and from the evidences, which nature supplies that the causal power evolving nature is a mental and rational, and at the same time a moral one.

Hence the idea of and belief in God.

This view of the origin of religion and its relation to morality has been worked out most fully by Dr. James Martineau in his "*Types of Ethical Theory*" and "*Study of Religion*." This theory, however, like the kindred one of Kant, is open to the obvious objection that religion, instead of thus depending on morality, rather precedes morality in order of development, and existed for many ages without it, and has come to coalesce with it only in comparatively recent times.

But these theories opposed to the historical order of religion and morality.

§ 115. III. But it is possible that *religion and morality have distinct springs* in human nature so that though they necessarily approximate and coalesce when a certain stage of mental development is reached, yet neither is derived from the other.

Or do religion and morality spring from distinct sources in the mind?

Morality, it may be said, has its origin in the *idea of a perfect self* which reason cannot fail to evolve at a certain stage of mental development; and its motive-force is ultimately the pride and self-satisfaction of raising one's self above the wants

Morality, from the idea of and aspiration towards perfection?

and imperfections of lower forms of mind, and realizing the higher possibilities of the self. And this aspiration towards the moral elevation of the self as something good and desirable for its own sake, may be found, it may be said, without any clear conception of a supra-mundane personality as the personal type of moral excellence or source of moral authority, and therefore without any religion properly so-called, as, *e.g.*, in the ancient Stoics and Buddhists.

Religion,  
from feeling  
of depend-  
ence and  
longing for  
self-preser-  
vation ?

Religion, again, it may be said, has its origin in *the feeling of dependence* for existence and well-being upon a higher power, which cannot fail to force itself upon the mind even in its lower phases of development ; and its motive-force is the desire of self-preservation and amelioration in the struggle for existence. The idea of a higher power on which they are dependent leads men naturally to the idea of winning the favour of that power, and obtaining its help in their struggle with the forces of the world. And religion in its primitive form means nothing more than this aspiration of men to gain the favour of this higher power, or powers, or of the most powerful of them, and to enlist them on their own side, in their conflict with other men and with the elements of nature—showing that the original motive-force of religion is aspiration not towards any ideal of perfection or goodness (which is the spring of morality), but towards the preservation and well-being of self in the struggle for life and prosperity.

And as the primitive tendency of men is to think of other powers as mental like themselves (until this personifying tendency is corrected b

experience), so they have a tendency to think of the higher power or powers on which they feel themselves dependent, as having feelings and passions analogous to their own. Hence religion takes at first the form of self-humiliation, flattery and sacrifice, as the ways most likely to win the favour of such higher personal powers. And hence, the more primitive forms of religion seem to have no moral ideal, and no connection with morality; and we find philosophers and prophets, to whose minds the true meaning of moral goodness first opened up, engaged in continual warfare against the prevailing religion of their times (*e.g.*, Plato and the Hebrew prophets).

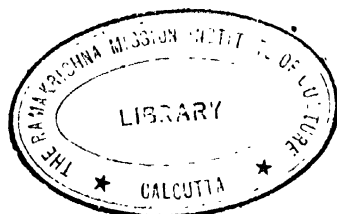
But though religion and morality thus have distinct springs and motives in human nature, such isolation is inconsistent with the essential unity and harmony of mind, and cannot fail ultimately to rectify itself. With the development of moral consciousness and reason, it comes to be understood that power and excellence of nature must ultimately have a common root, and that the supremely powerful must be at the same time the supremely good; and that the preservation and well-being of the self, which is the object of religion, is ultimately correlative with the essential perfection of the self which is the object of morality; and that the continued enjoyable existence of the self is dependent on the essential worth of the self as a rational being. From this point then, religion ceases to be a system of artifices for winning the favour and help of a higher power, and becomes an aspiration to be like God, or at one with God in nature and will; and thus the feeling of dependence rises into being

Prompting to worship of higher powers on whom individual existence depends.

But intellectual and moral development lead to a final synthesis of the two.

la feeling, at the same time, of kinship and sonship. And morality becomes an aspiration towards community of nature and harmony of will with God as the supremely perfect.

In this way, morality and religion finally coalesce; and human nature attains finally harmony and unity of active principles.



## ADDENDA.

- PAGE 66, *line* 32, after 'problem' add '—the principal constituents of the moral consciousness proper—'
- „ 89, „ 10, after 'law.' add 'But laws suppose reasons for them, and the reasons for the laws will be standards higher than the laws themselves.'
- „ 93, „ 15, after 'inference' add 'and in one of its forms at least it may be called the *rational* standard, because it makes the judgment to be a function of, and thereby makes the standard to be a product of *reason*.'
- „ 111, „ 28, after 'whole.' add 'Hence the proximate standard will be political and social law, but the ultimate standard will be the pleasure of individuals.'
- „ 121, „ 22, after 'altruistic.' add 'Hence sympathy and altruistic feeling have to be acquired, and they must be acquired by every individual in his own life-time.'
- „ 123, „ 3, after 'ourselves.' add 'Thus transference tends to make us forget our own interests, and think of those of others.'
- „ 125, „ 34, after 'ancestors' insert 'and instead of mind being a *tabula rasa*, as Locke assumed, without innate tendencies of thought or action, all its powers and tendencies are more or less innate,



though all have been acquired by experience'.

PAGE 127, *line* 30, after 'inheritance.' add 'The individual is born altruistic—sympathy and fellow-feeling are innate in his nature.'

" 135, " 17, after 'increase.' add 'Pleasure supposes a fund of life, but it marks the exercise and expenditure of that fund, not an increase of it.'

" 140, " 1, after '*obligation*' add 'Altruism requires us to sacrifice our own pleasure and interests to the good of others. But'

" " " 16, after 'duty' insert, '*i.e.*, our being bound to do good to others, and subordinate our own interests to those of others'.

" 142, " 8, after 'warranted' insert 'from an *ethical* point of view'.

" 143, " 27, after 'itself,' insert 'idealists say'.

" 148, " 6, after 'good;' add 'that it consists in the realization of the possibilities of perfection that are latent in the common essence of humanity, by the self-directed efforts of minds acting together in a society or community of minds;'

" 154, " 19, after 'agent.' add 'But this supposes that rightness is a quality inherent in the nature of actions, and that we have a power of perceiving it in them intuitively.'

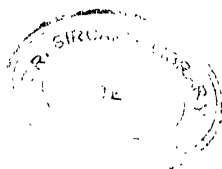
" 157, " 1, after '*intuitional*' insert '*rational*'.

" 158, " 17, after 'resides.' add 'This may be illustrated by a simple example. A poor boy suffering from hunger may fairly be said to be *out of keeping* with his circumstances. He seeks some means of relieving his

want, and, in order to do so, offers to supply some want of another person by carrying a message. In return for this he receives a silver coin from his employer. In exchange for this he obtains bread, and relieves his want. Now we can see that there is in all this—in his seeking to supply the want of another person in order to obtain means of relieving his own, in his receiving money for doing so, and bread for his money, and thereby relieving his own want—there is something which we can describe only as *fitness of relation*; and that in this fitness the *rightness* of the boy's conduct essentially consists. But if another boy, seeing him earn money, beats him, and takes his money from him, and regales himself and his friends with the stolen proceeds of another's labour, we can see that here every step is *out of keeping* with the circumstances, and that there is here something which we must call *incongruity* or *discord*, and that we have here the fundamental elements of the idea of wrongness.'

PAGE 173, *line* 1, after 'future' add 'with the power of picturing in imagination future pleasures and pains'.

„ 194, „ 14, add, "Among English moralists, this philosophical method of determining the nature of the moral ideal has been attempted most fully by Green in his '*Prolegomena to Ethics*.'"



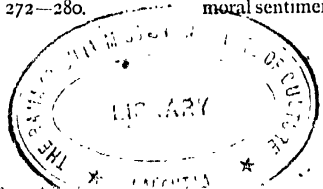
## ERRATA.

- PAGE 64, *line* 9, for 'better' read 'good or better'.  
" " " 12, for 'better' read 'good or better'.  
" 67, " 5, for 'constituents' read 'factors of action'.  
" " " 7, after 'constituents' insert 'of moral consciousness'.  
" 84, " 31, after 'intended' insert 'accompaniments and'.  
" 94, " 9, for 'as standard' read "as moral standard".  
" 103, " 9, for 'quality' read 'property'.  
" " " 17, for 'virtue' read 'virtue or rightness of conduct'.  
" 111, " 9, for 'claiming' read 'claiming as his natural right'.  
" 123, " 7, for 'to that' read 'to do that'.  
" 134, " 21, for 'their theory' read 'their biological theory'.  
" 139, " 23, for 'sense' read 'feeling'.  
" 140, " 1, for 'If' read 'if'.  
" 143, " 20, for '*law*' read '*legality*'.  
" 145, " 5, for '*a priori*' read 'from beforehand'.  
" 154, " 17, for 'good' read 'excellence'.  
" 174, " 11, for 'altruistic' read 'disinterested'.

## INDEX.

- Altruism, 109, 115 ; contrasted with Egoism, 116 ; not sensualistic, 119 ; source of obligation according to, 120.
- Aristippus, ethical doctrine of, 18, 114.
- Aristotle, on intellectual contemplation, 4.
- Benevolence, 236, 239.
- Bentham, on utility, 103 ; his calculus of pleasures, 117.
- Character, definition of, 73, 76.
- Christian idea of Perfect Self, 155.
- Collectivism in Ethics and Politics, 248.
- Conduct, definition of, 38.
- Conscience, 60, 168-194 ; according to evolutionary Hedonism, 126 ; as understood by Hedonists, 172 ; account given by Intuitionists, 174.
- Cyrenaicism, 114.
- Deductive method in Ethics, 33.
- Deliberation, 40.
- Democritus, atomic philosophy of, 18.
- Descartes, on origin of law, 97 ; on Highest Good, 152.
- Desire, 39, 62 ; and intention, 51 ; and will, 77.
- Duties, and rights, 201 ; and virtues, 225-244.
- Duties, determinate and indeterminate, definite and indefinite, 212-215.
- Ego-altruism, 112.
- Egoism, 108, 110 ; virtues, according to, 111.
- Epicureanism, 114.
- Ethical and moral science, distinction and purpose of, 2.
- Ethics, origin and meaning of, 5 ; distinguished from morals, 6 ; regulative science, 10 ; related to Philosophy and Metaphysic, 14 ; relation to Psychology, 22 ; and Sociology, 24 ; and Politics, 26 ; methods of, 30.
- Evolution, of organism and mind, race and individual, 125 ; ideal state of society according to, 129 ; relation to Hedonism, 124.
- Faculty, moral, 78, 168-194.
- Form or nature of an action, 92, 157.
- Good, negative characteristics of the Highest, 143 ; positive characteristics, 145 ; reciprocity of common and individual, 148.
- Great men, 252.
- Green, T. H., ethical method of, 34, 154, 194.
- Greek, ideal of Perfect Self, 155.
- Guilt, 8, 262.
- Happiness, distinguished from pleasure, 131, 166.
- Hedonism, 103, 110 ; criticism of, 130.
- Helvetius, his view of happiness, 114.
- Hindu idea of Perfect Self, 155.
- Hobbes, on right and wrong, 95 ; on state of nature and origin of society, 95 ; on just and unjust action, 98 ; good and evil, 113 ; on ego-altruistic origin of pity and benevolence, 113.
- Hutcheson, on Moral Sense, 177.
- Idealism, 143-156.
- Idealist theory, summary of, 150 ; difficulty of, 151 ; use and significance of, 154.
- Individual and Society, 244-253.
- Individualism in Ethics and Politics, 245.
- Inductive method in Ethics, 32.
- Instinctive action, 36.
- Intellectualism, 3.
- Intention, 41, 42, 51, 84.
- Intuitionism, 92, 156-164.

- Judgment, moral, 77—80 ; object of moral, 81—85.  
Justice, 234.
- Kant, his deduction of the three problems of metaphysic, 21 ; on the Highest Good, 152 ; on duty of man, 159 ; on duty and happiness 166, 274 ; his theory of virtue 244.
- Law, as standard of moral judgment, 94—101 ; objections to the theory, 93 ; different forms of the theory, 96 ; 88, moral, 199.
- Locke, on dependence of moral rules on God's will, 96.
- Martineau, moral scale of, springs of action, 180 ; method of moral judgment according to, 181 ; theory of obligation, 215 ; relation of morality to religion, 276.
- Merit, and guilt, 8 ; 253—263 ; outward manifestation of, 258 ; essential meaning of, 259 ; how judged, 260.
- Methods of ethical study, 29—35, 193.
- Mill (James), on origin of disinterested feelings by transference of interest, 123.
- Mill, J. S., on principle of utility, 103 ; on moral life, 104 ; on qualitative and quantitative distinction of pleasures, 118.
- Moral Consciousness, elements of, 8 ; 60.
- Moral Faculty, 78, 185.
- Moral Ideal, 59.
- Moral Judgment, 77—80 ; points in which it differs from other judgments, 79 ; nature of, 77 ; object of, 81 ; standard of, 85—94.
- Moral Law, 199—221.
- Moral Progress, dependent upon Intellectual Progress, 189.
- Moral Science, its scope, 7 ; different ways of stating problem of, 9 ; its relation to philosophy ; its relation to metaphysic, 19.
- Moral Sense theory, 60—67 ; 70 ; 77.
- Morality, obligatory and optional, 208.
- Morality and Religion, definition and relation of, 272—280.
- Morals, origin and meaning of, 5.
- Motives and Springs of action, 50.
- Nature and Temperament, 75.
- Obligation, Rights, 7 ; ground of, 200 ; view of, according to different theories of morality, 203 ; determinate and indeterminate, 213, 256.
- Paley, on moral obligation, 95 ; on human motive, 97 ; on Standard of Judgment, 102.
- Paradox of Hedonism, 134.
- Perfect self as standard, 143.
- Philosophy, definition of, relation to Metaphysic, 15.
- Plato, his identification of virtue with knowledge, 241 ; of the good with the beautiful, 242 ;
- Pleasure and Happiness, 132—166.
- Pleasure as standard— Criticism 130—143.
- Politics, meaning and origin of, 26 ; and Ethics, 27.
- Propensions, primary and acquired, 53, 54.
- Prudence, 108, 232.
- Punishment, 235, 262, 270.
- Rational Utilitarianism, 14.
- Reason, as faculty of judgment, 184.
- Reflex action, 36.
- Relativism of Sophists, 100.
- Religion and Morality, their origin and relation, 272—280.
- Repulsions, primary and acquired 54, 55.
- Responsibility, 8, 253.
- Reverence, 65, 113.
- Rightness, nature of, 157, 183.
- Rights and duties 200 ; natural, 248.
- Sanctions, 264 ; their connexion with different theories of morality, 267—270.
- Schopenhauer, his pessimism, 49.
- Self-realization, 146, 218.
- Sentimentality, 57.
- Sentiments, 58, 68.
- Sidgwick, rational hedonism of, 14.
- Smith, Adam, his identification of moral sentiment with sympathy, 68.











18 MAR 1958



